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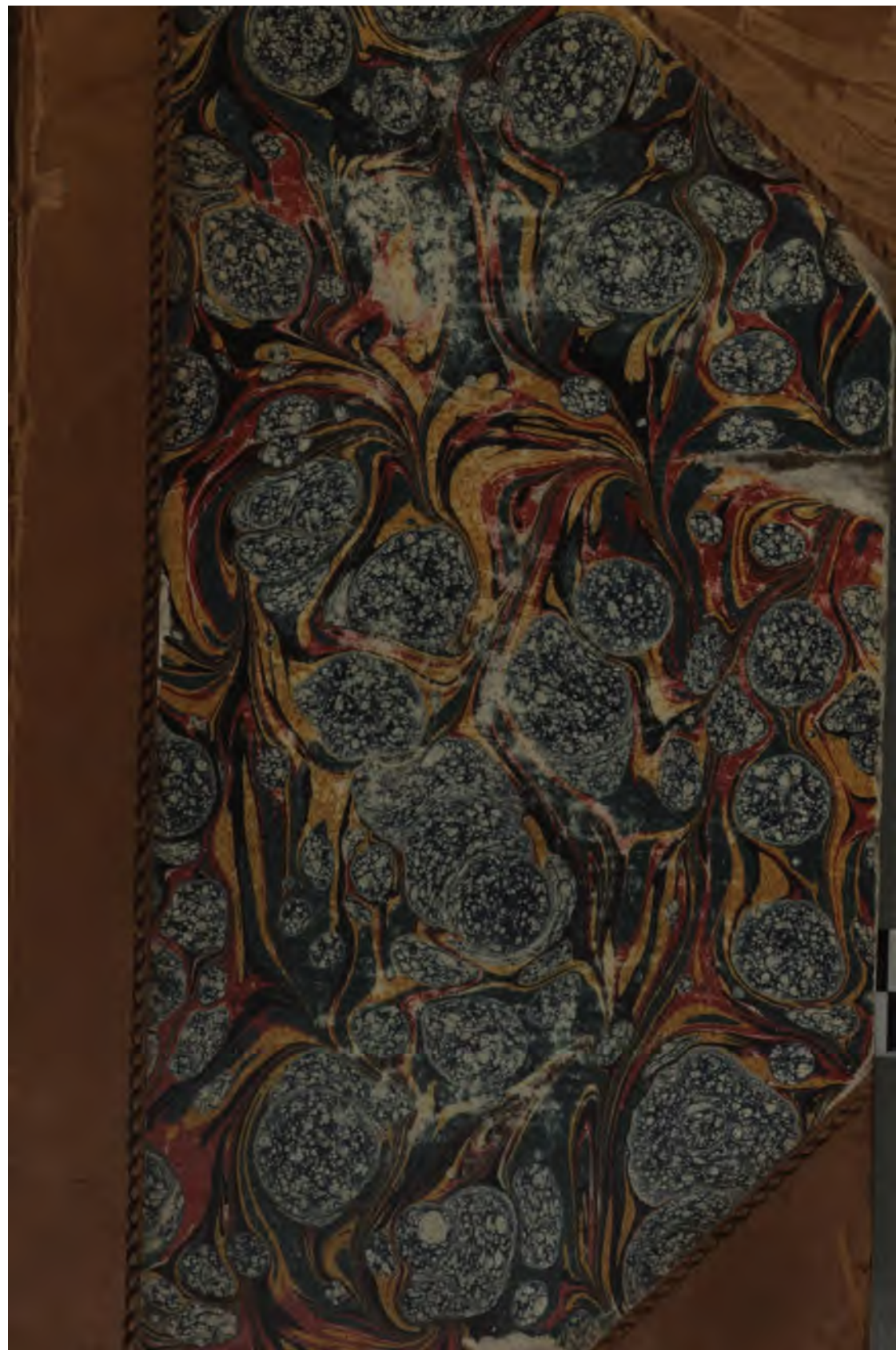
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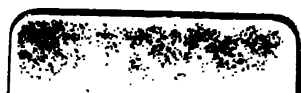
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THE
METROPOLITAN
MAGAZINE.



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THE
METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN BEHIND THE SCENES?

HAVE you ever been behind the scenes at the Opera? If not, come with me; everybody used to go, but they are stricter about these matters now.

You are surprised at the dirt and confusion? It is a rare mess. Scenes one over another—how do they ever get at the right one? Why don't they have them fresh painted, or washed, or something? Slack ropes, rough settles, polished gentlemen, and metropolitan policemen; young foot-guards and old women; beauty, and the beast close behind—everybody in everybody else's way, and yet things go on wonderfully.

In the midst of this confusion there is no discord; everybody is anxious for the success of the result, each performs the part assigned to him, and the rest do not try to help, but to keep out of the way. One or two calm-looking gentlemen, with moustaches, walk about and issue their directions in a quiet tone. A mysterious English youth, with a foreign appearance about the hat, glides quietly through the throng, with pieces of paper and a pencil, suspiciously eyeing the *corps de ballet*; and so all goes right.

"Am I to go on in the storm?"

"By a leaf, sir."

"Leave the door open, old fellow; I won't go too forward, on my honour as a lady."

"*Ciel!*" says the pretty little ———, whose over dress had not been successfully removed, at the moment of her going on; "do you wish to make me ridiculous? *Bon soir, monsieur; charmée de vous voir.*"

"Lower away! confound you, lower away!" and down come two trembling boys, having been very nearly spilt on reaching
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the ground. Their affectionate parents received, unpacked, and took them home.

Come round to this corner; Elise has just come off. Poor girl, how tired she looks! She is sitting there, in the centre of that little circle, with her back against the wall—yes, it is a startling attitude, but they are obliged to do it, you know, to prevent cramp. You heard the house almost maddened by her just now: she does not look as well as when seen from the front.

That little girl, talking to a dirty-looking man, with a pointed beard, is Clara Tonnere. Mamma is close behind her. Mamma is an honourable woman; her word, once passed, is sacred. She watches over her daughter like a minister of grace. The man with the pointed beard is Lord C——; he is very rich, and very wide awake. He is rather old, but what can a child like that know or care about difference of age?

These other young ladies make up the mass of the *corps de ballet*. Some, as you see, are biding their time in talk and laughter; others, of a graver turn, and who have more real business to do, keep their joints warm by exercise; others, again, are now performing the real business of their life, by listening to the whispered admirers of their "friends." They are not pretty, but then they are *ballet* girls; if they only get two shillings a night, they are still *ballet* girls. An intrigue with a *ballet* girl! To think that she will be seen to smile on you from the stage; to be able to say, "That is the girl you saw with me the other day!" "Will you bring her out?" "Hush!" "Ah, you old sinner!" "It is not fair to ask such questions."

However, let us go now. Come with me, and have some supper, and I'll tell you a story about a *ballet* girl and a friend of ours, which I think will interest you, and may not possibly be told without advantage.

You recollect Hertford at Trinity—it is of him I am going to tell you. The poor fellow has been dead six months, and his doings, if not his name, are no longer of interest to those who thought they loved him well.

You did not know him intimately; I did. We were at the same school, went up to the University in the same year, and took our degrees together.

You recollect that he was a man of peculiarly taking appearance and address. His father died when he was very young, and left him an unincumbered estate of £3000 a year; when he came of age, therefore, he naturally had another fortune in the funds.

It is no new thing to say that adversity is the nurse of friend-

ship, and pleasure its most bitter antidote: it operates invariably. With us it happened in this wise.

Hertford was passing rich on some £5000 a year, and highly connected: I had an allowance of £500 a year from my father, on whom my future prospects were absolutely dependent, and whose stern existence rendered credit hopeless. My connexions were not high.

I could not keep pace with him. A good season is like a good run; you can't afford to wait for your friends. Our roads through society were different, and we saw but little of each other after our establishment in London. At the end of the season he disappeared: no one seemed exactly to know what had become of him, and I never saw him again until a few months before the accident which caused his death.

I met him one day hunting in the midland counties. He was living in an old farm house, on some outlying piece of property, for his own estate was quite in another part of the world. Discomfort reigned over him: the only earthly thing he seemed to care about was his horses, of which he had a large and very fine stud. He told me he very seldom saw anybody. I staid with him two or three days, and there he told me the cause of his retirement, and the story I am going to tell you.

We are now, let me see, in August, 1849. Well, it was in February 1845, that we made our first appearance in town. I will give you the story as nearly as I can in his own words.

I need not tell *you*, he said, that I was always inclined to be what is called a fast man. But in early days, there was much of the milk of human-kindness in my breast; it gave me pleasure to do a good-natured action when the opportunity presented itself. Pleasure was my object, and my mind was not prepared to seek it in any but the ordinary way. In the thoughtlessness of the pursuit I did much wrong, but not wilfully at the expense of others. I had stopped short of deliberate vice. But a little time in town soon drowned my remaining scruples in the oblivion of dissipation: I found acquaintances ready made; society opened its arms to me; and considering that I did not bet, play, or keep a cottage and a brougham in St. John's Wood, I was a wealthy man, and somewhat sought after accordingly.

I always had a turn for theatricals, and the opera used to be a favourite lounge with me. With regard to women I had been rather careless: there was not one in a thousand I thought worth half an hour's trouble, and although the good ladies behind the scenes afforded me infinite amusement, they were perhaps the very last on whom I should have bestowed my at-

tention. Still, as I said, they amused me, and I commonly passed a great portion of my time at the opera, behind the scenes; and perhaps it was my very carelessness in this respect, joined to the reputation of wealth, and the acquaintance of only the most distinguished of the *habitués* of the place, that made me an object of considerable attraction, and in a certain sort, a marked man among them.

A very short time after the commencement of this season of 1845, I observed among these damsels, one whose curiously retiring habits seemed at strange variance with those around her, and altogether unsuited to the sphere in which she moved. I do not think she was beautiful, but her face beamed with modesty (smile if you will) and intellect—but you recollect her—it was Lucy Manson.

I pointed her out to a learned friend, and asked who she was.

"It won't do."

"Well, but who is she?"

"One of the *corps*."

"Well, I know that, man; but I mean, what is her name?"

"Lucy Manson."

"I never noticed her before."

"No, I dare say not; it is not her game to be noticed. This is her first season here. She is an odd girl: she does not dance badly, but she'll never be much more than she is now. There is great precision, but her style is not slashing enough for the boards—wants confidence, you see."

"Ah, yes; I understand," said I, moving away towards the spot on which she had been standing. She was gone: but I moved on and caught a glimpse of her dress. She was sitting by an elderly woman, of very respectable appearance, whom she strongly resembled. It was her mother. They were conversing, and ceased as I approached; she raised her eyes and fixed them on me with an absent, uninterested look. I passed her, and shortly after left the house.

It was strange how that girl's eyes haunted me. I wondered who she could be; why she differed so much from all around her; how she got there at all. Then I thought, Bah! she is but a *ballet* girl: I will go to-morrow and speak to her: a little behind-the-scenes talk will soon place her in her proper light. There is something odd about the girl, too: she is not half so fine a woman as half a dozen others there, and yet—I must draw her out.

The next opera night found me behind the scenes again. The *ballet* had just begun: she was conversing with two of those whose acquaintance I enjoyed, and I could consequently join them without any apparent intrusion on her.

The two damsels, though in all respects qualified for members of the *corps de ballet*, were quiet, unobtrusive girls, new at their profession ; I watched them some little time before joining, this perhaps attracted their observation ; but it was evident when I came up that their conversation, though I was ignorant of its purport, had turned upon me. The look that Lucy Manson now gave me was no longer an uninteresting one. I entered into conversation with them, she joining apparently without hesitation. My two friends were soon induced to leave us by the arrival of certain well-dressed elderly visitors who appeared for the time being to engross their souls. I was left alone with the girl ; the elderly lady was no where to be seen. Well managed, I thought. More interested in her than I cared to admit, I proceeded in the ordinary way to improve my acquaintance, but soon found that I was pursuing a very wrong course. We discussed the new opera which had that night been produced, and I was astounded at the taste displayed in her remarks—they were those of a cultivated mind ; her language was refined ; her manners that of a lady, and oh, the tones of her voice ! It was time for her to go on, she bowed slightly, and left me impressed with the truth of what my friend had said—She *was* an odd girl.

I watched her closely on the stage, and felt that she never would be more than she was ; she was not fit for it. She danced well, but it was the perfection of *ladylike* grace ; she did want confidence to go through the lascivious exhibition which calls down raptures from the unprofitably excited crowd, who applaud the crime and condemn the criminal. Her style was for the ball-room rather than the stage.

Her task was done, and she retired to prepare for departure. My offer to escort her home was coldly but politely declined, she even seemed kind. Her mother, she said, was waiting for her.

Wrapping myself closely in my great-coat, I waited at the door to see her depart. She was one of the last who came out ; all her sisters had gone, some in their own or their friends' carriages ; others, whose hour was past, under the escort of those less wealthy admirers who were content to enjoy the pleasures of their society at second-hand. They were dispersing in all directions to eke out the already far-spent night in *petit soupers*, &c., &c.

At last, muffled in a quiet dark cloak, leaning on her mother's arm, she came, and, not even indulging in the luxury of a hack-cab, walked quietly to their home in Brewer-street ; it was a lodging over a grocer's shop. I followed unperceived till they entered the door.

That night I went direct to my chambers, ruminating on this fascinating ballet girl.

This must be all a scheme, thought I, but I am too old a hand to be easily caught—*doucement*!—we shall see.

Every opera night found me behind the scenes guardedly improving my acquaintance with the pretty Manson. My friends were not slow in observing my doings, nor backward in making their remarks thereon, confidentially informing me that it would not do; I was losing my time; that —, and —, and —, had been in the field before me, and even they had failed; but little cared I. There was a pleasure in talking to her that I had never felt before.

Once or twice did I try to test the reality of her staid behaviour, but any advances of that nature were repulsed in a manner that made me repent most heartily of having made them. A sort of friendship seemed to have sprung up between us; she was always glad to see me at the opera, but our language was still the language of friends.

At length, one night she came alone: her mother, she said, had a very bad attack of influenza; she feared these nightly walks were the cause, and much as she disliked walking in the streets of London alone at night, she could not allow her to continue them. I requested to be allowed to see her home; at first she declined my offer with the same cold politeness she usually showed when I in any way went beyond the bounds of mere ordinary civility, but urging the unpleasantness of her lonely walk more strongly, she at length accepted my offer with thanks. My cab was at the door, and I offered, as a matter of course, to hand her into it; she drew back suddenly, and said pointedly, "Thank you, no; I had rather walk." I pressed her no farther, sending the man home. I turned naturally in the direction of her house, and she said with a smile, "You walk as unhesitatingly as if you knew where you were going."

"To Brewer-street, Golden-square," said I, "am I not right?"

She did not answer, and I could perceive that she was both surprised and displeased at my knowledge.

I continued, for I was out of all patience with myself and with her, and forgot the ground I had hitherto maintained over my own feelings—

"Can Miss Manson wonder that, having once seen her, I could help striving to become acquainted with the abode of so much beauty and worth!"

"She can wonder that Mr. Hertford should have condescended to acquire indirectly a knowledge which that insignificant person

had herself seen no necessity for imparting: the more that it can hardly be a source of congratulation to a man of feeling to reflect that he will cause inconvenience to a poor person, the very lowness of whose station will not allow her to be the hunted of tigers, and watched of hired crossing-sweepers."

"Upon my honour, Miss Manson, you are wrong, I have not done you this insult: for myself I acquired the knowledge which I must now regret, inasmuch as it gives you pain, and to myself I have kept it: but why will you blame me? It cannot be that you have misunderstood me! It cannot be that all is cold in such a bosom as yours! Lucy, I love you, by Heaven! better than I ever thought to love woman. I am as little akin to those gay things who have fluttered around you, casting their cheap admiration at your feet, as you to the frail pieces of woman's flesh by whom you are nightly surrounded. I love you better than my own soul. My love for you, long suppressed, has become a part of my very existence. Quit this harrassing life for which you are little suited; trust me that your mother, your every friend shall be well provided for. Quit this place once and for ever. If I make you not happy, may all misfortunes accumulate on my head."

I pressed her arm closely to me while I spoke, and bent down to her face; she showed no sign of resentment, but I felt her whole frame tremble, and her eyes were suffused with tears. She hesitated, made two or three attempts to speak, but at length said, in a low but distinct voice,

"Would you marry an opera dancer?"

I was hardly surprised at this from a girl of her character; but the firm direct way in which the question was put took me aback, and for a moment I was lost.

"What signifies the idle ceremony of marriage between us two? Can it unite us more firmly than the bonds of love! I do not like marriage. Do you wish for legal obligations, you shall have them. I will so bind myself to you as to leave no alternative between ruin and fidelity. I will bind myself never to marry—never to love any but you. What would you more?"

She burst into a violent flood of tears; I feared that a fit of hysterics would be the end. In a very few minutes, and with the most wonderful self-command she turned to me, and said, "I thank you, sir; I need take you no further." I stammered out Heaven knows what. "And yet," she continued "though you have shown yourself all the blackest, you have said rightly, you are not like the rest of them, and honour, if not feeling, may restrain you. I will trouble you yet more:—My father was a respectable tradesman who had raised himself to opulence by an uninterrupted attention to his business. A plain man

himself, he yet understood the value of instruction for his children, and our education was not neglected. We were admitted to the best society in the neighbourhood where my father's country-house was situated; and he was on the eve of retiring to end his days there on the proceeds of a life of industry, when one unfortunate speculation involved us all in irretrievable ruin. The society which had tolerated, quickly rejected us; we had lost our passport. We left our house, and took lodgings. My poor father was obliged to labour as a journeyman in the trade of which he had lately been the head; our holiday friends deserted us, of course. My father was too proud to ask assistance of any one; and mental anxiety, super-added to severe bodily labour, soon deprived us of our last support. My mother was too delicate to work; and, in our extremity, I applied to the person who had been my dancing-master, and whom I knew to be in some way connected with the theatres: by his kind assistance I obtained an engagement at the Opera, and some occasional employment in teaching in his own establishment; and have been enabled to use the little talent I possessed for the support of my poor mother, and her three helpless little children. In spite of the prayers and remonstrances of my mother, I entered on this mode of life. I came prepared for the trials to which I should be exposed; but if a woman be strong in the consciousness of virtue, she need not fear the open solicitations of vice. I have been insulted, I have been surrounded by temptations; but when vice comes unmasked before us, our task becomes comparatively easy. Privation, death, anything before *deliberate* sin. Those to whom I have before been exposed, failed by the very audacity of their villainy. She must be base, indeed, who yields to mercenary considerations; and the woman who has any mind, can despise a mere appeal to the passions: but he who attacks our affections wounds the more sensitive part of us: it is against the insidious approach to the heart that we must guard. Such, sir, has been your deliberate plan, long and unrelentingly pursued; you see I do not disguise my feelings from you. You are not like the others, and your insult is only the more cruel for the manner in which it has been offered to a helpless orphan, and the paltry sophistry with which you have endeavoured to disguise it. But one word more. If you consider it consistent with your feelings as a man of honour and a gentleman—to your heart I should blush to appeal—to throw a widowed mother and her children penniless on the world, you will succeed in doing so by pursuing the course you have commenced—the next time I meet you behind the scenes of the Opera House I forfeit my engagement. You have well contributed to the misery of one whose only

offence against you is that she ever crossed your path. Let that suffice. I wish you good night."

Her tones, at first those of passionate indignation, softened as she spoke of the misfortunes of her family; her words were broken by frequent and half-suppressed sobs: but, finally, her sorrow merged in anger at the unmerited insult which had been offered her; she spoke in a voice well worthy of the sentiments with which her heart was bursting, standing erect, with her flashing eyes fixed full on mine. Every pulse in my body quickened as she went on; and when she had finished I stood motionless—speechless—it was but a moment. When I recovered, she was gone.

It was sometime before I could sufficiently collect my thoughts to weigh well the words she had uttered. What my feelings were it would be difficult to say. At first, a consciousness of foiled villainy, then pique, disappointment: then love, admiration, and an inclination to throw myself at her feet, and give her all, hand, fortune, everything. When cool reflection came, I felt this could not be. But one alternative remained. She must be mine! How? Even at the expense of honour and truth. But still she must be mine. She had admitted that her heart was gained: the rest was easy. I was shocked when I thought of the base course I must pursue; but I did not hesitate. Still it was the first time I had ever been guilty of such deep-laid deceit, and my mind naturally recoiled from it. Her very helplessness, which should have been her protection, but strengthened me in my resolve. I satisfied myself that she could not escape; that if she did not fall into my hands, she might into worse; that I might as well gain her, since she was to be gained. I am not sure that, eventually, I did not persuade myself that I would be doing her a kindness by taking her under my protection. Shame whispered the wrong into my ear; but my heart was hardened against the hissing suggestions of conscience: all virtue was drowned in the unconquerable desire to possess this beautiful creature. Marry her I could not; there was but one other way. I consoled myself with the reflection that but for the rites of the church, which I tried to think idle, we should be to all intents married; that my fidelity and constancy to her should never cease; that I could amply compensate her by love, affection, and in worldly circumstances, for the injustice I was about to do her. The result of these wretched reflections was that I wrote to her, urging the violence of unreflecting passion as an excuse for my conduct of the night before, making her an unequivocal and deliberate offer of my hand, and praying that I might be allowed to call that afternoon, to be introduced to her mother. I acted basely to her from be-

ginning to end. I explained, to disarm her of my suspicions of sincerity, that my own father had made his money in trade ; that, therefore, my family was no whit better than her own, and need be no obstacle to our union ; that although my friends might desire a wealthier match for me, still, when once united, they would not discountenance us. I might have spared my soul this accumulation of guilt ; truth herself, she entertained no doubt of the truth of him she loved. Resolving to give her no time for reflection, my letter was scarcely dispatched ere I followed myself ; my dress was carefully arranged to meet the mother's eye, deviating as far as was consistent with a gentlemanly appearance, from the man of fashion. When I reached the house, I inquired for the mother.

"Manson ! Yes, sir, please to walk up two pair ; the door in front of you."

I was shown into a small room, but which still evinced the presiding hand of female taste and delicacy. Everything was poor, but neat.

I waited some minutes, during which there was no sign of life, at length a light foot was heard slowly descending the stairs, the door opened, and not the mother, but herself appeared.

Her eyes were red with weeping ; but an ill-concealed gleam of pleasure lighted them up as they rested on me. She was dressed most becomingly ; I never saw her look more beautiful than at that moment. We were both confused ; I with too good reason. "Her mother," she said, "was so indisposed as to be obliged to keep her bed."

I expressed my regret, and we stood for a moment in awkward silence.

At length, taking her hand, I led her to the little sofa, and placing myself beside her, said, "Lucy, can you forgive me ?"

She tried to speak ; her bosom heaved convulsively, and her voice was lost in broken sobs. I placed my arm round her waist, and drew her to me ; she offered no resistance.

"Can you not pardon me ? Do you not believe in the sincerity of my repentance ? Will not all the love I feel for you, prove to you, suffice to blot out the recollection of a few hasty words ?"

"And do you really love me ?"

"Love you !—better than my own soul."

Villain, hypocrite as I was, I told no lie in that. I would have sacrificed these both to society ; but I loved her best. She threw herself into my arms, and, hiding her face in my bosom, gave vent to her pent up feelings in a flood of unrestrained tears. I pressed her to me, and endeavoured to kiss away her grief. "And do you love me, too, Lucy ?"

"Ungrateful!" she cried, reproachfully; "how can you ask? From the first evening—do you recollect it?—that I heard the tones of your voice, your form has scarcely ever been absent from my mind. When I have been surrounded by the mere votaries of fashion, listened to the emptiness of their well-worded professions, and been disgusted with the smiles of hypocritical vice; when I found talent but a veil for deeper rascality, and the fool the less dangerous villain of the two, I have thought that if such were man, I would banish the feeling of love from my bosom. And then you came; you did not speak to me as others did; you did not seem to think me a thing without intellect or feeling, unworthy to be addressed but as a mere creature of passion, a pretty plaything to be deceived, acquired, destroyed and thrown aside. Your words were those of a gentleman; your sentiments of a man of feeling: and then when I had suffered myself to—to—I will tell you all—to love you, and I heard you address in the same strain those who could not appreciate half you said, and would rather have listened to the fulsome adulation of their ordinary admirers, a pang has shot through my heart, not of jealousy, but to think that, alas! I was no more to you than they, and all alike, but the sport of the moment; but a look has reassured me. And then when, though striving constantly to check it, I at length gave full way to the flow of the first full tide of love, to think that, after all, you differed from the others only in the superiority of your talents; that you, too, had been wooing me to destruction, but more deliberately, more vilely than any, oh! you cannot—you cannot imagine the anguish of that thought. You cannot know what I have suffered since we parted last night, till this morning has made amends for all. And, oh! if my poor love cannot compensate you for the sacrifice you make to public opinion, to fortune, your own conscience shall reward you in the happiness you have bestowed on so many wretched creatures."

Conscious of my own villainy, every word she uttered went to my heart: curse the folly that prevented my doing justice to so much excellence. I should now have been a happy man.

The next day I returned, her mother was so unwell as to be unable to rise. The night before she should have been at the opera, but had been obliged to send an excuse, and remain with her sick parent. I urged her to give up the engagement, either altogether as unworthy of her, or at any rate during the time that her mother should require her constant attendance. With much difficulty I prevailed, at least until her mother's health should be restored. To give it up altogether would be to make herself dependent on me. However she consented to my taking a note to the manager, or whatever they call him,

asking for a suspension of her engagement for a time. I took the note and threw it into the fire; in the meantime I called on the lessee, and requested the favour in my own name, and *for my own convenience*. It was easily granted; and while the ballet girl watched by the sick bed of her dying mother, the trusted child of Fortune plotted her destruction.

At last I came, and her mother was dead. She had heard her daughter's tale, and been anxious to see me; but death was too quick with her: with her dying breath she prayed for and blessed the protector of her orphan children.

I did not see Lucy that day; the next I called; she had subdued the violence of her grief: feeling how entirely her mother's younger children depended on her for support, she had evidently resolved to be equal to the emergency. She was calm, but it was the calmness of suppressed anguish.

Fearing the expenses she must necessarily incur, would dangerously diminish their little funds, she would have gone through the mockery of woe at the Opera, and danced upon her mother's grave; she assured me she was quite equal to it: at the same time that she fell into my arms in a fit of hysterics.

"For myself," she exclaimed, "I could bear the heavy loss—but what will become of these little ones?"

Forgetting in her grief for how long she had been their sole support, and that she was left to them.

I promised, aye, over her mother's corpse I swore, that I would be a husband to her—a father to them.

With difficulty I made her promise not to resume her engagement at the Opera yet, if ever; and to apply to me if she were in need of money.

The funeral was scarcely over when nature gave way: the restraint she had put upon her feelings, reacted upon her bodily health, and a severe illness was the result.

I took a room in the house in which she lived, and during the continuance of her illness, scarcely ever left it. The greater part of my time was spent by her bedside. I nursed her with unfailing assiduity. And when she recovered sufficiently to leave the house, was the constant companion of her walks and her drives. I persuaded her as she regained strength, even to go sometimes for a day or two with the children and myself into the country.

She had become so gradually habituated to my presence, that she seemed not to think of its impropriety or its danger. She appeared to think it quite natural that I should be always with her, and to have forgotten everything but my tenderness.

Our evenings were spent in each other's society, and we would talk of the future, our prospects of happiness, our marriage.

My friends, I had told her, were abroad ; on her recovery I had professed to have written for their sanction to our union : there was no doubt of our obtaining their consent, and we waited but their answer.

In another month it must arrive, and then we were to be married.

She trusted as she loved me. Alas, for her !

In the meantime, I induced her to terminate her engagement with the Opera House people at once. The season was nearly at an end ; she was not in good health ; and, at any rate for my sake, and for my name's sake, she ought not again to be seen on the boards. She had money enough to last her for the next six months, if needs were, since she was resolved not to accept my assistance ; for, during her illness I had contrived, by the kindly connivance of the good-natured people of the house, to defray every expense, and leave her stock untouched.

She consented ; and one morning walked down to the house. There was a rehearsal of some kind going on ; and several distinguished "amateurs" of the day were there observing the proceedings.

Her business was soon transacted ; she was received with smiles, and her request readily acceded to. The worthy man regretting to hear that her health had been so bad ; and inquiring after Mr. Hertford, whom they were sorry to have missed for so long a time.

Poor Lucy blushed at his mention of my name ; but she had banished all suspicion.

In recrossing the stage, she rested a minute or two behind two of those worthy amateurs, and presently heard one ask the other,

"Who was that little girl you looked so hard at, just now ?"

"Just now ? Oh, Lucy Manson."

"Lucy Manson ! So it was ; I have not seen her here a long time. What has she been up to ?"

"Living with Hertford."

"Living with Hertford !"

"Yes ; so the world says—so everybody here says. I took the trouble to inquire of the manager, and he told me she went away with him some two months ago ; he came down to the theatre *himself to arrange matters*. He plucked the thorny rose that none other had ventured to touch. Curious fellow that. He never seemed to care for a woman till he saw her, and then he cuts us all out. —, and —, are as mad as the devil for they both tried and failed. And of all places in the world, they are living, I understand, in Brewer-street, Golden-square ; nobody ever sees him. He seems to be given up body and soul

to her, and certainly she is a dear little creature. I was one of the rejected myself. I once sent her a little pocketbook with a £1000. note in it, and the little gipsy left it in the lobby, and told me I had better send for it, or it might be lost. So I did. But there certainly is something devilish taking about that fellow Hertford; I believe there is not a woman in London who would not give her very soul for him."

Poor Lucy had heard enough; she staggered dizzily across the stage, and found herself in the open air.

Her good name was gone: instead of going home, she turned into St. James's park, and sat down on one of the benches.

She reflected long and painfully on all that was past; on all that was to come. And who that has loved, as woman only can love, shall question her conclusion.

Was it his fault that such reports had gone abroad!—what had he done to give force to them!—was it for her to charge the scandal of the world on his self-devotion!—was she to repay his tenderness with suspicion!—his confidence with doubt? What though the world *should* blast her good name, was he to blame!—had he anything to do with it!—was she to make him miserable with a report which was founded in falsehood, and fostered by vice!—did she not know from the first the stern dictum of society; and that she had forfeited her reputation at the moment that she became an opera dancer!"

She came home, and throwing herself into my arms, wept long and passionately. She explained her grief by saying that the scene she had just visited, had called up sad associations, almost forgotten.

My suspicions were aroused; I thought that she was shocked by something she had seen or heard at that place, and I did not question closely.

In an hour she had decked her face in smiles, and all seemed to be forgotten.

On this part of my story I need no longer dwell. I availed myself of the opportunities which cunning assiduity had given me. Poor Lucy was lost.

She uttered not one word of unkindness or reproach: for some time she seemed lost. She was absent and sad, but there was no violence in her grief; sometimes and for short intervals she was even gay: but day by day she became paler, thinner, more silent. My endeavours to cheer her were rewarded with smiles, but produced no further effect.

At last she became really ill. I was alarmed, and would have sent for a medical man, but she intreated me not to do so.

"Wait till to-morrow, and I shall be better."

To-morrow came ; but far from being better, she appeared infinitely worse. I was shocked beyond measure at her appearance : my soul staggered at the sight : I accused myself of being her murderer.

She detained me by her side.

"Lucy, dearest Lucy, what is the matter? what can I do to relieve you? Have I made you unhappy, my own darling? is it I who have done this? Oh, what a villain have I been! Alas! what can I do to repair this injury?"

"Do not distress yourself for me, dearest; listen with patience. You see only the effects of a struggle between love and duty: the struggle is over, and its effects will pass away; I shall be better directly. You cannot marry me, Harry; I know it now. That world which smiles upon the crime, would condemn the atonement; and that society which now welcomes would then reject you."

"What care I for society?" said I, passionately; "I will marry you, dearest: my whole life shall be devoted to your happiness."

She was evidently not quite prepared for this outburst of feeling, and almost overcome. But she pressed me to her, and continued,—

"Do not interrupt me, Harry dear; hear me out," and she spoke in a voice of wonderful calmness and decision. "Do not reproach yourself with my misery: had I not known you, I should never have known the happiness I have. My life was wretched before, it may be so hereafter; but the interval has been love and brightness, worth an age of misery. Let us think now of the future. You would marry me: I will believe you. But Harry, I love you too well to wish that you should take a woman to your bosom whose name is already tainted. Do not sigh, love; that at least was not your doing. You are not answerable for the scandalous words of the libertine who blasted my good name, and gave me to the four winds of heaven as a ———. Shall I deny your tenderness because evil resulted from it? Let me confess, that when I gave you all, I felt that I gave not much. I had left my good name at the door of the opera house: fair fame was gone. What then remained?"

"I alone am to blame: let me only suffer. To make me your wife, would be to destroy your own happiness, and add none to me. We may not marry: we must not live on in shame and open sin. For what is past, God will, I trust, accept my repentance; but my example shall not lead others into the same error.

"No, dear Harry; you would be wretched in either case, for you love me well: and for your sake, to your happiness, I sac-

rifice—*not* myself; I am not worthy mention—but one who will some day be dearer to me than all beside. Our child will be marked with the brand of illegitimacy: but better far to contemplate the possibility of his discontent, than the certainty of his father's misery. We must part, at once and for ever. My plans are fixed: I will accept from you £100 a year, which will keep us in affluence in the country, to which I shall retire at once. If any occasion arise, I will write; if not, do not seek to see me."

I tried to persuade her, that even if it were too late for marriage, we might be happy in each other's constancy, and retire from that world which we could not set at defiance. Even then I felt that my heart was not large enough to brave the scorn of society, and make this noble creature my wife. She stopped me, saying,—

"No more: I am lost here, but not I trust hereafter. Unceasing repentance will surely, in the eyes of an all-merciful God, atone for a fault which was the offspring of love. Oh, do not think me capable of setting at defiance all the laws of him whom I have revered from my cradle, on whose benevolence my hopes are fixed. I will so far confess the credulity of love as to admit that I believe you would keep your promise of probity to me without marriage, and that, could my conscience sleep, I might be in every other way happy with you; but to yourself the obligation would soon become an intolerable burthen. And shall I, who have already felt so acutely the agony of shame, by my example induce others to incur worse evils than mine? What right have I to brand with infamy a race of innocents, the result of my own crime?"

"No; though we should be indubitably miserable, I would sooner marry you. You love me better than you will ever *again* love woman: you see, I make no disguise from you, though I am not the first, or perhaps, the best loved. But let that pass: you have raised me from poverty, you have saved me from death; you must not, dearest, preserve me to infamy.

"For what is past, may God forgive us. Do not think I blame you: the fault was mine. By education and early habit, woman is put upon her guard against the snares which will be laid for her: her virtue is almost concentrated in one point, over which she is to watch with jealous care, and when she yields, it is to her own inclination, not to the solicitations of man."

My tale is nearly ended. I could not move her: we parted. She would accept no more than the sum she had already stated, and I never saw her again in life.

Some months after I received this letter,—

"When you read these lines, my own dear Harry, your Lucy will be no more. My time is near at hand: I feel that I shall not survive it. If it please God to spare my child, remember its helplessness, protect its innocence. I do not ask fortune or position in society for it: let it love God. I cannot tell you all I feel: may you soon find one who will love you as well as I have done, and make you happier than I could. If any recollection of me shall cause you a moment's pain, forget me: but oh! Harry, by all that we have felt, by all that I have suffered, forget not those helpless little orphans, who have no friends but you."

Her presentiment was fulfilled: she died, and happily the child of misfortune did not survive her. The note was sent to me with another from the people with whom she lived, detailing the circumstances of her death.

From thence hitherto I have lived unfriended and alone, nursing and fostering vengeance against that society to whose poisonous influence I was a victim. Remorse for injury inflicted, regret for happiness lost, have made up the bitterness of my reflections, and through all the weary course of time I am working out my punishment. It cannot last much longer. The three little children I have already provided for, and I trust they are in the hands of persons who will watch over them with all the tenderness of their own parents. They are beyond want, and I hope beyond danger. I dare not see them."

Within three months from that time Hertford broke his neck out hunting. He had made no will, and his fortune was divided among relations whom he had scarce ever seen, and of whom not one bore his name.

THE WALK TO THE FORGE.

(A BALLAD FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.)

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SWISSIANA."

A gentle page was Fridolin,
 In fear of God lived he;
 He served to love well nigh akin,
 Count Savern's fair ladye.
 She was so mild, she was so kind,
 That e'en her wildest hest he'd find
 A way whereby to gain a smile,
 And thus in joy his hours beguile.

Soon as the early morning shone,
 Till the late vesper bell,
 He lived for her mere nod alone,—
 Could never serve too well.
 And quoth the dame, "O work not so!"
 Then would his eyes with tears o'erflow,
 As if in duty he had failed,
 Or 'fore a hard command had quailed.

"Twas thus the countess deemed him well
 Above her train to raise,
 And from her lip for ever fell
 His inexhausted praise.
 She held him not like other knave,
 But as a child her heart she gave;
 Her liquid eyes a pleasure took,
 To melt upon his comely look.

For this, in huntsman Robert's breast
 Most direful hatred came,
 His soul with envy was opprest,—
 He nursed the vengeful flame—
 And to the count, a hasty man,
 The knave his lying tale began,
 As once from chase they homeward sped,
 And sowed suspicion,—thus he said:—

"Great Count, your lot is wealth and weal,"
(His wile to hide he sought,)

"Nor in your golden dreams doth steal
The poison'd tooth of doubt :
For you possess a noble spouse,
And modest shame unites the vows ;
The smooth seducer strives in vain,
The pious fair one's love to gain."

On which the count did foam and chafe :
"What say'st thou now, bold knave ?
Think'st thou I build on women's faith,
As restless as the wave ?
She's weak to brave the flattering sound,—
My faith is built on firmer ground.
Unto Count Savern's wife, I ween,
No smooth seducer e'er hath been."

The other spoke:—"And you are right,
The fool but wants your scorn ;
Who, though a simple vassal wight,
And one most basely born,
Must to the dame he serves aspire,
And breathe his thought of mad desire."
"What !" cried the count, with angry cheek,
"Is it of one who lives you speak ?"

"Surely, can that as day is clear,
Have quite escaped my lord ?
Yet, since it hath not reached thine ear,
O list not to my word."
"Sirrah, thou speak'st the words of death !"
The other screamed with gasping breath ;
"What fool has dared thus tempt my rage ?"
"I spoke of Fridolin, the page."

"He's not ungainly in his form,"
The wily Robert cries ;
The count grew cold—the count grew warm,
Confounded by his lies.
"Surely, my lord, can you not see
That in her eyes alone lives he ?
That he avoids your board with care,
And posts him near his lady's chair."

"And then the verses which he penn'd,
Confessed the unholy flame—"
"Confessed !"—"And with a lowly bend
The boy besought the same !

The Walk to the Forge.

Doubtless, the countess, good and true,
From pity kept the lines from you ;
And I'll unsay my words again,
Should they have caused your highness pain."

Straight galloped he with vengeful ire,
The count a wood unto,
Where, in the mighty furnace fire,
The iron ore did glow.
Here, late and early, fed the flame
The smiths, with tireless hands the same.
The sparkles fly, the bellows groan,
As if they would melt rock and stone.

'Tis here that fire and water power
Are seen together bound :
The mill-wheel, in the liquid shower,
Whirls swiftly round and round.
All day, all night, the forges glow,
In measured strikes the hammer-blow ;
And amid this din and clashing,
Stubborn iron ore they fashion.

Two smiths, as o'er their task they bend,
The count he calls away :—
" The first whom I to you may send,
And who to you may say,—
' Have you obeyed my lord's behest !'
Thrust him in yon hell-fire your best ;
And let him like those ashes blight,
That he no more offend my sight."

Glad were they, the brutish pair,
With hellish smile they grin ;
For senseless as the iron there,
Their heart it slept within.
And swiftly with the bellows' blast,
'Gan they the flames to swell avast ;
And rife for crime themselves prepare,
To wait the coming victim there.

Then Robert to his fellow spake,
Full of hypocrisy,—
" Up, comrade, up, nor tarry make,
Our lord hath need of thee."
To Fridolin his lord thus said :—
" Haste to the forge which gloweth red,
And ask the knaves who labour best,
If they've obeyed my strict behest."

The page replied,—“ I’ll do thy will !”
And straight ran to the task ;
But of a sudden held him still,—
“ Hath she no word to ask ?”
Then forthwith to the countess went,—
“ My ladye, to the forge I’m sent ;
And thou hast some command, perchance,
To do which will my joy enhance ?”

In silvery tones, like brooklet clear,
The dame she did reply :—
“ The holy mass fain would I hear,
But my babe sick dost lie :
I prithee, then, my child, away,
And raise a double prayer to-day ;
With meekness all your sins o’ertrace,
That I may thereby find some grace.”

The welcome hest with lowly bend,
The henchman ran to do ;
But ere he reached the village end,
While swiftly hastening thro’
Upon his ear a sound did steal,—
It was the clear and ringing peal,
Which calls all sinners to repent,
Thro’ mercy of the sacrament.

“ From God on high turn not aside,
But seek him on thy way !”
And to the church he bent his stride,
But few were there that day :
For harvest ’twas, and every field
Required a man the scythe to wield ;
And none was there the choir to fill,
But one the mass to serve with skill.

Forthwith the good resolve takes he,
The sacristan to play ;
“ That should admit no doubt,” quoth he,
“ Which points the heavenly way.”
And standing by the priest all dumb,
He hangs the stole and cigulum ;
And then he hands the cup and glass,
Wherewith the priest may serve the mass.

Now, when this duty’s done with care,
As ministrant he stands
Beside the priest and altar there,
The mass-book in his hands.

Now right, now left, he dost incline,
 Watchful of every word and sign ;
 And when the *sanctus* blessing came,
 Thrice fell he at the holy name.

Then when the good priest, bending low,
 The shrine approaching nigh :
 The symbol God, the cross, doth show,
 With arms uplifted high :
 The silver bells the boy began
 To ring, as doth the sacristan,
 The kneeling crowd the breast did beat,
 And humbly kissed the cross' feet.

And every part he filled with grace,
 With quick and inborn art ;
 For every form within that place
 The lad he knew by heart.
 Unwearied to the close he staid—
Vobiscum Dominus was prayed :
 'Tis thus the priest a blessing lends,
 And thus the holy service ends.

Each holy thing he then sets up,
 Each in its place dost lay ;
 First cleanseth he the sacred cup,
 Then speeds him on his way.
 And with his conscience thus at rest,
 Towards the forges quick he prest ;
 Twelve paternosters, too, the while,
 The distance of the road beguile.

The smoking chimney when he spies,
 And the pair working best,—
 " Ho ! knaves, *have ye*," to them, he cries,
 "*Obed my lord's behest ?*"
 They twist their mouth with ghastly grin,
 And point the furnace flames within :
 " The deed was done by yon same fire,—
 We servants wait Count Savern's hire."

On with this answer, on he flies,
 With swift and breathless flight ;
 Whom when the count afar off spies,
 He scarce can trust his sight.
 " Unfortunate ! whence comest thou ?"
 " Sire, from the forge."—" Not elsewhere, now !"
 " Sure, somewhere on the road didst stay ?"
 " Sire, only in the church to pray."

"When from your sight, my lord, 'tis true,
I went to do thy hest,
I ran to ask what I could do,
To please my ladye best.
The mass, my lord, she bade me hear,
And glad I was of words so dear ;
And for her peace and thine told o'er,
My rosaries, in number four."

Deep stunned, this speech Count Savern heard,
All wondering in amaze :—

"And at the forge, say—say, what word
Or speech the smiths did raise?"
"Dark was their speech, my lord, I ween,
They spake it with a hellish mien,—
'The deed was done by yon same fire,
We servants wait Count Savern's hire.'"

"And Robert?" gasped the count, abroad,
While cold run thro' his blood ;
"Sure, Fridolin, he crossed thy road?
I sent him to the wood."
"My lord, in wood or field, nowhere
Did I see trace of Robert there."
"Now," cried the count, abashed his sight,
"The God of heaven hath judged aright!"

And kindly, like he'd ever loved,
He took the page's hand ;
And brings him to the countess, moved,
She naught did understand.
"This child, no angel is more pure,
O may your love for him endure !
How weak were we to be misled,
While God and heaven waft o'er his head !"

SCENES IN SPAIN.

No. III. — THE EMBROIDERED BANNER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DOLEFUL as the story was, and sentimental as my friends deemed it necessary to become under the influence of the history of the fair Senora, the repast which speedily succeeded the narrative suffered not the less, notwithstanding whatever mental afflictions may have visited my male companions. But as regarded the ladies, the case was diametrically reversed; for the very instant they were placed in possession of the tale, it appeared somewhat doubtful whether they would not sally forth on the instant in quest of the much persecuted heroine, prior to taking into consideration what description of assistance they were about to proffer, as well as the extent of their ability to do good. This anxiety on the part of the fair travellers was by some attributed to a feeling approximating towards curiosity: but I, for one, am fully persuaded it had its origin in a superior and far more generous motive.

And who can blame the kindly impulse which, responding to a detail of suffering, readily casts aside the cold, calculating axioms of society, and nobly dares public opinion in effecting what, probably, may prove beneficial to the distressed?

Who would stigmatize the inexpressible impulse leading to so meritorious a consummation? And happy is it for the rougher and less polished portion of society, that the paramount influence of women is so frequently called into action, when our more hardened natures would have carelessly passed by objects of compassion without comment or regard.

Thus premising, in order to avoid future misconception touching our unbounded devotion where a lady is concerned, we recur to our friends at Loxa, who, notwithstanding the misery they had suffered, and the great fatigue already undergone, were ready and anxious to brave the toils of another day's march.

A second time we were destined to encounter disappointment and a wetting: for as on the previous day, the sun kindly put forth his glorious rays to cheer us on our road at morn, so did he likewise towards evening withdraw his genial influence, and, by way of contrast, the rain poured down instead.

Another edition of cold, darkness, and hunger, was by no means exhilarating in prospect; yet how could the threatening evil be averted? To attempt reaching Granada ere nightfall was on all sides acknowledged to be vain. To mend the matter, both mules and muleteers evinced most visible and impressive demonstrations of a fixed determination to proceed no further, and as their present disapprobation by much exceeded even their previous dissatisfaction, it was but too plain we were wholly at their mercy: and sooth to say, the men deserved but little blame in having jumped at so uncompromising a resolve, since every effort made to urge their jaded mules onwards proved productive of considerable exertion at their expense, without the smallest benefit accruing to any of the party. A prolonged detention on the road being much more probable than a forward movement, a council of war was speedily summoned.

The night had by this time become perfectly dark—the roads, broken by the incessant rains, were scarcely passable even by day—the ladies were of course dispirited and fatigued, and to crown the whole, our guide, whose declarations had hitherto been sanguine, now declared it was worse than madness to proceed.

That *veto* issued, hopes of further progress were annihilated; to remain where we were was impossible, and accordingly a retrograde movement was unavoidably agreed on, in hopes of regaining a small hamlet called “El Hacha,” which having passed through some two miles back, offered the only chance of accommodation for leagues around.

After much toil, and many doubts as to the practicability of ever reaching the miserable shelter we were in quest of, we eventually gained the anxiously sought for hovel—for little better was the building wherein the choicest flowers in the bouquet of our aristocracy were destined to pass the night. As for repose or sleep, both were incompatible with the appurtenances to the lodging, for the new comers had momentary proof afforded that their presence was not a matter of indifference to *all* living creatures.

Complex and manifold as our miseries were, starvation formed no item among our sorrows, for Monsieur Perrin, that most enlightened of *artistes*, who accompanied the expedition,

taxed his abilities to the utmost, and not only succeeded in pandering to the sharpened appetite of his legitimate master, but also ameliorated the hunger endured by his less aristocratic admirers.

Singular likewise was it that this same promoter of gastronomy was, when in the service of Marshal Soult, compelled to halt, together with his general, in the very hamlet we then occupied. On the former occasion, the French commander lost two aides-de-camp by assassination, while the *restaurateur* escaped the knife of the murderers to attend to the ordinary wants of the sworn enemies of his country, on the same distant and unfrequented spot, at an interval of twenty-six years.

The room, or more properly speaking, the barn which the ladies honoured with their presence possessed not the most remote appearance of anything approximating to comfort. The floor was a wet soft clay; the walls old, broken, and disgustingly filthy; fowls roosted wherever they could find space; and the small fire which dimly burnt at one corner of the hut sent up volumes of dense smoke to the ceiling, where, finding it impossible to escape, it descended to struggle for egress through the low and narrow door-way.

From the roof long strings of garlic and onions were suspended in anything but fantastic festoons, while grapes and melons in abundance lent their aid in diffusing a sickly perfume around. Beds there were none; neither, had such necessary adjuncts towards rest been there located, would any of the party have been tempted to trust themselves to their downy influence.

Barren of all interesting objects as "El Hacha" appeared, there was a figure seated in the furthest corner of the hovel who, rising at our entrance, betrayed by his soiled and saturated apparel that he likewise had sought shelter but a few minutes prior to our arrival.

So engrossed were we at first in attending to the comforts of the ladies, that the presence of the stranger passed unheeded; but when at length every available disposition had been effected towards a semblance of comfort, we could not fail in being struck with the remarkable figure of the Spaniard. He was beyond the common height, and to a countenance even then extremely handsome was added that touching pensiveness, so irresistibly attractive, and which, as a true indication of deep though silent grief, never fails to interest the beholder.

In this man, the lineaments of his intellectual countenance were too deeply stamped with the insignia of long borne anguish, to admit a doubt but that the cavalier formed one of the many thousands on whom the blighting influence of dissension in their distracted country had not passed by unscathed.

His manner towards ourselves was unobtrusively polite, and the alacrity with which the humble peasants flew in obedience to his bidding proclaimed the possession of no small share of influence among those by whom we were surrounded. The orders which the stranger issued referred not to himself, while the many small alleviations to the misery endured by the ladies, and which previously we had frequently asked for, were now readily tendered; and by this seasonable, though unexpected interference, their position was somewhat improved. Common civility, were it nothing more, urged us to advance some few words of courtesy in return for the substantial benefits received: but all attempts at conversation proved abortive. Our remarks were listened and replied to with that easy air of seeming interest which the well-bred gentleman can at all times summon to his aid. The attention of the stranger was visibly directed towards ameliorating the uncomfortable position in which the fair travellers were placed, but beyond that he appeared determined not to step.

Whether he understood the English language, or merely guessed at the meaning of the words unguardedly dropped by some of the party, I cannot say; but on an observation being made, the reverse of uncomplimentary to his noble carriage and graceful bearing, a slight smile stole across his features, more it seemed to me in scorn than from a feeling of gratified vanity, and bowing slightly to the fairer portion of our party, he cast his huge *manta* across his arm, and instantly departed from the hut.

"Then was conjecture instantly busied with his name:" the gentler portion of the group of course came to the conclusion that the handsome Spaniard must be a brigand in disguise, and from his melancholy cast of countenance, of course desperately in love with some beautiful *senorita*, who was yet unacquainted with her admirer's lawless mode of life; while the men, far less sentimental, gave it as their decided opinion that he was some confounded rascal, sent to spy out the strength of the party and probable amount of booty to be gained, should his companions deem it worth while to risk a chance shot or two, in hope of appropriating to themselves what hitherto we had looked on as our own.

But on this occasion neither suppositions were correct, for the handsome though unhappy looking cavalier, we were afterwards informed, was no other than the celebrated Soto Mayor, the betrothed husband of the beautiful though most unfortunate Mariana Peineda, who, for a political offence, as it was then termed, suffered the Garrote in 1832, at Granada, on *the very spot where* the inhabitants are now busied in erecting a

monument in commemoration of her unshrinking magnanimity and courage. On the following day, I stood upon the place where that fair creature died; it is exactly in front of the theatre, and close to the hotel where the generality of English sojourn: the ground is still shewn where the scaffold was erected, and the site is the same where the intended statue will be placed.

A few days subsequent to our meeting Soto Mayor, as I was gazing on the work in progress, my fancy led me back to the awful hour when, exposed to the insulting gaze of a brutal mob, a woman—aye! and one of Granada's choicest daughters—stood, calmly and unflinchingly resigned, to undergo the torments of a painful and dishonourable death, rather than utter the one brief word that would instantly have restored her to liberty and life. But no; *that* word so anxiously sought for by the authorities would have consigned to capital punishment him whom the devoted girl loved far better than herself, and therefore was it that, in preference to yielding up the knowledge so ardently pressed for, Mariana Pineda stood prepared to testify, by the sacrifice of her life, the fervour of woman's devotion, when called into action by the wand of that powerful enchanter—Love.

It is a sad tale, and many have been the versions circulated throughout Spain, but in the generality of narratives blame has been attached to her betrothed: yet, if the story as it reached me—and with every assertion and possible evidence of truth was it given—be correct, the reader will coincide with many in acquitting the wretched man, still living, of any participation in the crime, or as frequently was asserted, of shielding himself from danger by the sacrifice of a young and beautiful woman, who loved him, as it proved, even to the death.

Soto Mayor was, as is the case with most Spaniards of family, brought up in indolence and ease. His father, and again, his ancestors, had all been noble, and the blood that flowed through the veins of the young Soto Mayor claimed equality in purity with majesty itself. Unless called into action through some powerful excitement, the tenor of a Spaniard's life is passed in apathy and listlessness; they regard exertion as a nuisance most religiously to be shunned, and thus, with music and cigars, they sing and smoke away the best hours of that existence allotted for other than those all-engrossing pursuits.

Like his countrymen, Soto Mayor would indisputably have driven away his life as ingloriously as the greatest admirer of indolence could desire, had it not been his lot to exist in times

when that most baneful of all curses, civil war, stalked forth in all its bloodstained strength and power.

Divided, as for years past Spain has been, it were difficult to surmise at what period a happier and more peaceful dynasty may rise up to bless that beautiful but unfortunate country. Even at the very instant we are writing, father is opposed to son, the nephew to the uncle, and scarcely a family can be named throughout Spain that does not reckon in the ranks of each opposing faction, friends, connections, and frequently near relatives themselves.

For a long and painful period, the attention of all Europe has been directed to the fierce struggles yet unappeased, but all intervention has hitherto proved unproductive of good, while the blood and treasure lavished on the cause by other powers, seem to have produced no effect beyond that of fanning into a brighter flame the embers which it was hoped would, long ere now, have been extinguished.

It is not in the gayer and more happy days of youth, when influenced by a generous desire of siding with the oppressed, that we pause on the threshold of our career to commune as to which may prove the more fitting path we should choose whereon to run our course, and to the unthinking there is ever something so much more attractive in the very sound of "liberal views," that we need not wonder at the many advocates who readily embrace the plausible misnomer in preference to working in the old and tried principles which for ages past have carried us so safely through danger.

In such a temperament was Soto Mayor when the fast increasing dissensions in his native land, compelled all who could boast of nobility or lay claim to notice, zealously to embrace one or other of those parties whose factious proceedings were rapidly hurling down the few tottering supports by which the remaining advantages of their constitution were upheld. Yet was all done in perfect secrecy, for the government was not at that period so sunk in imbecility and supineness but they retained sufficient strength to meet, with some show of defence, the machinations, when discovered, of their opponents.

That an extensive and powerful combination was on foot, having for its ulterior object the total overthrow of the reigning dynasty, was well known, but as its movements were cautiously hidden, and the mystery which enveloped the proceedings difficult to draw aside, so were the punishments consequent on detection severe and cruel in the extreme.

Political rancour, like religious fanaticism, when at its height, spares neither sex nor friends; and, in the civil war which then desolated Spain, women — and women, moreover, of the highest

birth, and blessed with beauty, virtue, and the manifold accomplishments which ever invest the female character with such paramount interest, even those bright ornaments of our existence—were frequently carried to the scaffold, there to appease, by the sacrifice of life, the ruffian clamour of the senseless mob.

In the year 1832, the annihilating demon stalked unchecked through all the southern provinces; and in the spring of the epoch was it, that on a soft and delicious eve Mariana Pieneda wandered through those beautiful courts of the Alhambra, which, once seen, never by possibility can be forgotten.

Those who care to peruse a full and comprehensive detail of all that appertains to the romance of that enchanting spot, should read the work of Washington Irvine, written within the elaborately decorated walls of that gorgeous palace, and those who would seek more solid information on all that treats of the history of Granada, would do well to take into their notice the best, and by far the most interesting, account that has ever issued from the press.*

On a theme so alluring, we cannot tarry on our way; for, were we to commence a description of the enamelled pavements decorating the many courts of the Alhambra, the delicately carved roofs, supported by the fragile-looking fluted pillars, varied with the brightest colours interspersed with gold, the arabesque figures, perfect as when first placed there by the conquering Moor, the soft murmur of the splashing fountains, and the delicious perfume exhaled from myriads of flowers, we should never be able to proceed with our tale; yet, it were as impossible to forget, as we find it useless to attempt leaving, a subject so exciting, without expressing—yet in how faint a degree!—the mixed feelings of admiration and awe with which we have stood in those magnificent halls, now deserted, and silent as the tomb, while every decoration and beautifully carved ornament around so vividly recalled to mind the days when the most polished and gallant nation upon earth held there undisputed sway; the gorgeous fabric still remains an unanswerable evidence of the refined taste and enlightened civilization which once shone with such refulgent brightness on the ancestors of the now ignorant, and, alas! all but savage Moor.

It was eve; Mariana stood by the fountain in the more than beautiful court of Lions, gazing on the gold and silver tenants of the marble vase, into which the crystal stream poured its

* Prescott's History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. London: Bentley. 1839.

refreshing shower. Yet, though her eye was fixed upon the water as it fell, the steady gaze with which her look dwelt on the object before her, proclaimed how distant from the lovely spot wherein she stood were the thoughts then occupying her mind.

To describe the faultless form and features of that high-born Spanish girl, were vain and futile as it would be to picture to each what ideal fancy may dwell on as perfection. Those whom we have heard treat of the story of her melancholy fate, ever liken her to what they deemed most beautiful and good, and by the sequel of this melancholy narrative it will appear that her devoted love and inexhaustible affection for him to whom her hand was plighted, fully equalled in strength the splendour of her beauty's blaze.

Poor Mariana! were your thoughts then leading you to the contemplation of what it was decreed so soon should happen; or was your mind, till then untuned to sorrow, revelling in the anticipated possession of happiness which it was ordained never should be yours?

Whatever the vision might have been that for a time held her senses in thrall, it was not of long duration, for suddenly regaining her self-possession, with a slight start and a stifled sigh, she instantly turned her brilliant eyes, half suffused with tears, towards the countenance of the companion by her side. That companion—need we say—was the son of her father's friend—the chosen playmate of her infant years—the adviser and protector of her childhood, and now, in the bright hour of her dawning womanhood, her ardent, enthusiastic lover—Soto Mayor himself.

Yet were they not alone; for apart, but not so far distant as to lose each word of the passing conversation, stood a lady, young, handsome, and engaging; yet ever and anon as she bent her well-turned figure in the act of gathering a flower to add to the bouquet carried in her hand, her searching eye glanced rapidly towards the lovers with an expression by no means indicative of joy.

Elena de Santaguella was a near relation, and for years had been the chosen friend and companion of Mariana, yet while the very innermost thoughts of her unsuspecting friend were readily laid bare for her scrutiny and comment, she was in her own heart cherishing in secret a sentiment which was destined to overmaster reason, and supersede each better feeling which should influence a woman's actions, and finally was it doomed to hurl destruction upon all.

It was not by the beautiful Mariana alone that the young and graceful Soto Mayor was beloved; though the object then

cherishing her unbounded passion cared little to disguise, when in his presence, what the real state of her feelings were ; but so thoroughly engrossed was the Spaniard in contemplation of his adored Mariana, that his having found favor in his cousin's estimation, to the prejudice of his betrothed, never for an instant crossed his mind.

As for Mariana—innocent and unsuspecting—she viewed her young relative with affection and esteem, and in her frequent commendations on her lover found nothing but a desire to gratify, by such conversation, the natural inclination planted in our nature of listening to praises lavished upon those we love.

From what we have now written, let it not be supposed that the youthful mind of Elena de Santaguella had from infancy been a prey to foul and unfeminine passions. From the unamiable and revolting picture now portrayed, however, it would appear possible, that, notwithstanding the very few years she had numbered, there harboured in her breast the specious germs of treachery and deceit ; but so it was ; and corrupt as we acknowledge the heart must have become ere it could willingly cherish so unfeminine and wild a passion as Elena gave way to, nevertheless, the instances on record are manifold, and more especially in warmer latitudes than our own—where love, having once asserted his supremacy, retains the ascendancy he has gained, even though the possession be maintained at the expense of happiness, nay, of honor, and even of life itself. In the instance before us, however severe the struggle may have been ere the victim surrendered herself to the undisputed sway of so debasing a control, the complete expulsion of all honorable feeling from her bosom made room for the reception of a train of cunning and well concealed fraud, and in brief time she was readily taught to nourish a sentiment bordering on aversion towards that relative to whose fostering care she owed so much, and from whom she had ever experienced the greatest kindness and protection.

When once an evil passion, instead of being crushed in the bud, and radically rooted out from the mind where it essays to spread its poisonous fibres, is first tolerated and finally cherished, even though it be in secret, it is surprising how speedily we become familiarized with what, but a short time previously, we would have shrunk from with unfeigned abhorrence and detestation ; and thus was it with Elena, for at the period of our introducing her to our readers, she had long ceased to regard her mad infatuation as treachery against the happiness of her friend and benefactress, but rather did she view the placid contentment of Mariana as an insult offered by a successful rival, and mentally she resolved, that unless her iniquitous scheme

could be accomplished, Soto Mayor should never claim her relative as his bride.

Such were the vindictive and selfish feelings reigning in the breast of this miserable woman at the time when, ostensibly employed in gathering flowers, not a common expression or trivial action passed between the lovers, but it was well noted and indelibly impressed on the tablets of *her* memory, who, of all others in the universe, the unsuspecting couple deemed it certain they could count on as their friend.

"But why not, Mariana?" observed Soto Mayor, in reply to some remark his companion had just uttered, "why not?"

"For very many reasons, and certainly some among so large an assortment must be good," was the reply, half in jest, yet at the same time with considerable earnestness of manner.

"Nay, Mariana," interrupted her lover, "I do not for an instant doubt the solidity of your reasonings; I only ask to share with yourself the knowledge you allude to, and since you are acquainted with causes to me unknown, why not grant my boon, and wherefore should you withhold the relation of facts from *me*, who must necessarily feel most interested in the undertaking?"

"To conceal any thing from you," instantly responded his affianced bride, "I trust will ever be foreign to my wish, but among other causes which would induce me to hope that your request, trivial though it seems, may not be again urged, I only beg you to call to mind the awful consequences which inevitably *must* follow should detection of the actors come to pass: this of itself, Soto, should be amply sufficient to induce you to dismiss the matter from your mind."

"But wherefore *should* we be detected, Mariana?" immediately replied the other, "and even were it possible to become known that such a banner was in my possession, they would not dare to touch *you*; therefore is it that again I say, Why should you fear the result?"

"It is not for myself I tremble," mildly replied the noble-hearted girl, "but it is on your account, and on yours alone, that I care to cherish my misgivings. Do we not daily—nay almost hourly witness scenes the most revolting, and are we not made constant listeners to tales of cruelties hitherto unknown? Are not our enemies ever ready to assail even those who are barely suspected? and where no proof exists of their enmity towards the government, we well know that a single hint dropped to the opposing party, or vile anonymous denunciation made in the influential quarter, are amply sufficient to raise up unmitigating persecution against those who think not with themselves."

"True," Mariana," rejoined the young cavalier; "the existence of their unbounded cruelty, and most inhuman and unmanly persecutions, admits not of contradiction, but the term of their despotic rule is fast ebbing away, the hour of unprecedented tyranny is verging to a close, and in brief time a brighter day shall dawn on our misgoverned country; and when—as soon will be the case—the brave advocates for liberty and our rights shall simultaneously cast aside the veil which has hitherto shrouded their movements, what standard can we unfurl capable of inspiring the band of patriots with such devoted zeal in the good cause as the bright banner of freedom, embroidered by the hands of one of the noblest, and by far most beautiful of Spain's bright-eyed daughters?"

"Nay, nay, Soto," smilingly replied Mariana; "your own partiality would needs make you imagine that the banner you are so anxious to obtain would hold equal value in the opinion of others as with yourself; but," she continued, gently pressing the arm on which she rested, and gazing beseechingly on her companion's face, "but I implore you first consider what may be the consequences to yourself should this insurrection, praiseworthy though it be, fail, through superior strength and prowess of your foes, or from any of the innumerable causes which yet beset your path?"

"But, Mariana," he exclaimed, "again and again have I endeavoured to convince you that our undertaking *must* succeed!"

"And yet, dearest Soto," she added mildly, interrupting him, "and yet, notwithstanding all your arguments in favour of the cherished supposition, you have hitherto failed to assure me of the certainty of the anticipated result; and why should *you*, from among the many, step forward as the most prominent of the adverse faction, while others who have boasted the loudest, and promised most, now that the hour for action is at hand, claim not the position which by right is theirs, but willingly leave you to bear the odium, punishment, and disgrace, all of which must inevitably attend upon defeat? while in case of success, these very men will endeavour to deteriorate from the value of your services, and will unblushingly claim as their reward that return from the hands of the nation which, in common justice, should be bestowed as the result of your unwearied exertions."

"Mariana—Mariana," replied her companion, "let us not anticipate these melancholy and chimerical results; a brighter day is yet in store for Spain, and a new dynasty shall arise, and an incorruptible constitution shall be formed under shelter of the "Embroidered Banner," presented by my beloved bride to

those who struggle for their rights, and that circumstance alone will doubly nerve the arm of all who gather underneath its silken folds."

"But recollect, Soto," mournfully rejoined his attentive listener, "recollect, I beseech you, that the very persons against whom you would so readily draw the sword, are your own countrymen, and, in many instances, your acquaintances, even though you acknowledge them not as your friends."

"But are they not enemies to Spain?" energetically he exclaimed; "are they not opposed to the free constitution which by right of liberty is ours? are they not?"

"Indeed—indeed, Soto," exclaimed Mariana, interrupting the outburst of patriotic feeling in which he was about to indulge, "I cannot argue on this point as you can—nor indeed do I pretend for an instant—for how should I?—to understand the deep schemes of policy in which you are so deeply engaged. 'Tis true I cannot speak on these matters, Soto, as you so readily can explain them; but if I claim not a man's mind at once to dive into the future, and readily draw conclusions as to coming events from the occurrences daily passing around, at least I possess the keen perception of a woman, who intuitively can discern from whence danger to those she loves may be apprehended; and this it is, my beloved Soto," murmured the affectionate girl, laying her small hand upon his shoulder, while the unbidden tears ran silently down her cheeks; "this it is, Soto, and this only, that instigates me so fervently to beseech you to withdraw, ere too late, from the dreadful cabal in which you are engaged. Oh, why—why," she continued, with more energy than she had hitherto displayed, "why should we risk the happiness yet within our reach in hopes of grasping a doubtful addition to your honour, and one, that even if attained, never can be won, but by the sacrifice of perhaps thousands of your fellow creatures?"

"But I have already gone too far," muttered the agitated youth, while pressing the beautiful figure of his betrothed to his breast; "I have gone too far, my Mariana, to withdraw without disgrace and dishonour: not twelve hours have elapsed since I plighted my solemn oath in the presence of the chiefs, and before God, never to sit down in tranquillity and peace until the reigning dynasty be overthrown, and our accursed aggressors be buried in the dust."

"And is it so in truth?" mournfully replied Mariana, her beautifully chiselled features pale as the whitest marble; "and is it in reality as you have said?"

"As I hope we may meet hereafter in another world, never to part more," was the almost solemnly uttered response.

"Then be it so!" calmly and with an expression of true dignity, she exclaimed, after a moment's pause. "Since the evil *must* be encountered, let us meet it boldly; what *you* risk, that will *I* dare. No more shall word of mine strive to turn you from that path which you say never can be quitted but with loss of honour;—from this hour I embrace your cause;—your friends shall be my friends, and though the enterprize we engage in may heap destruction on our heads, the greatest satisfaction I can derive is in knowing that, should you fall a prey in the undertaking, I shall not be separated from you even in death. But why look so sorrowful, Soto, now that the object you have so long sighed for is attained? The banner shall be quickly wrought, and the good taste of my pretty relative so busily engaged amid yon parterre of flowers, I am confident will aid me in the task—will you not Elena?"

"Aid you in what task?" inquired the lady addressed, moving towards her friends as though unconscious of each syllable of the preceding conversation—"in what am I to aid you, Mariana?"

"In the construction of a silken banner, Elena," somewhat hesitatingly answered her relative.

"For whom?—for what?" again inquired the perfidious ally.

"Oh! for Soto Mayor—in short for the Patriots," was the hurried response, already deeply regretting she had made the request; "surely you will not object to lend me your assistance, Elena, will you?"

"To embroider a banner—a banner for Soto Mayor and the rebels! oh, I shall be delighted!" and making a low obeisance, which it were difficult to say whether enacted in sport or derision, the sylph-like figure of Elena de Santaguella turned towards the gorgeously decorated Hall of the Ambassadors, and her light footstep soon ceased to echo on the Mosaic floor.

CHAPTER II.

SOME weeks had elapsed subsequent to the conversation detailed in the last chapter having taken place; but the conspiracy which Soto Mayor was expected to head was not sufficiently matured to permit the actors in the intended tragedy openly to avow their disaffection—yet were the preparations progressing, and although nothing was publicly proclaimed, men stopped each

other in the crowded streets, and by the anxiety evinced in the eager question and cautious reply, it was plain to surmise some important occurrence was expected speedily to take place.

All was doubt, suspicion, and alarm, for although every one was ready to prognosticate a general movement being close at hand, none were capable of discovering from whence it might be looked for to arise, nor on which quarter the blow might fall.

The theatres remained as usual open, public amusement received no check from the authorities, laughter and music resounded from all quarters of Granada, and many plunged deeper amid the gaiety and revelry that offered, as though conscious they stood upon a mine which at any moment might be sprung, and therefore they resolved to enjoy to the uttermost whatever blessings life yet offered to their grasp.

Unconscious of expectancy of evil—in so far at least as the continuance of gaiety seemed to warrant—there were few persons, even amid the most boisterous in their mirth, who did not anxiously watch for some open symbol of revolt, which would at once enable them to decide in behalf of which party to raise their banner, since experience had long shown them the utter fallacy of attempted neutrality when a country rises in rebellion against the reigning power.

Soto Mayor, like many other active partizans on what was termed the patriotic side, had been some days absent from Granada, stimulating with his uttermost power the excited feelings of the many who, like himself, had sworn to prosecute their struggle for liberty, even at the price of captivity and death. But in the smaller towns, as in Granada, much cunning and precaution was requisite to elude the vigilance of the authorities, who were ever on the alert to suspect and denounce any of the opposing faction. To this end disguise and dissimulation in all degrees were unhesitatingly had recourse to, and scarcely could Soto Mayor venture to repose beyond a few hours in the same spot, so narrowly were the actions of all strangers regarded and commented on.

This it was that precluded the possibility of any communication passing between the beautiful Mariana and himself—neither indeed would it have been deemed politic to have trusted their secret to paper, even had a mode presented itself by which an intercourse with his beloved mistress could have been kept up; added to which both parties were well satisfied that the contents of any document would speedily have been perused by whoever might chance to gain possession of the epistle.

Fully acquainted, therefore, with the impossibility of hearing from each other prior to the anticipated happiness of their next

meeting, and accustomed in those troublous days to experience the disappointment consequent on long protracted absence from those they loved, people ceased to marvel at the silence maintained by their distant friends, nor looked they for communion with their relations prior to their much wished for appearance at their homes.

To Mariana de Peineda the hours naturally passed heavily on, nor was it probable that her thoughts would be turned into any joyous channel, busied as her mind constantly was in endeavouring to foresee the result of that revolt which daily observation told her was at hand.

Since the departure of Soto Mayor from Granada, on the mission already referred to, the beautiful Mariana directed all the power of her needle guided by her exquisite taste, in accomplishing the completion of the Embroidered Banner which was to lead her lover's partizans to liberty and triumph. There were moments, and possibly many, when the affectionate girl pursued the unwelcome task with aversion and disgust; from the very first she had strenuously opposed the project, and every influence which her lively imagination could suggest—every innocent stratagem had been tried to wean her betrothed from the toils into which he so heedlessly rushed; but when he solemnly assured her that to retire from the band in which he had enrolled himself would be tantamount to dishonour, his betrothed bride never again returned to the subject in tones of disparagement, but rather exerted her utmost to instil those hopes into her lover's breast which she vainly endeavoured to cherish in her own.

Yet there were periods when a horrible feeling, akin to consciousness of approaching evil, flashed across her mind, prompting her to cast aside the silken emblem of rebellion which it was now her constant occupation to labour at.

The Banner, under the hands of its fair mistress, was approaching completion, and with apparent willingness and alacrity the handsome Elena de Santaguella lent her aid towards perfecting the work, and so zealously did she appear to interest herself in every matter connected with the intended revolt, that the unsuspecting Mariana willingly bestowed that confidence on her seeming friend which, as the sequel will demonstrate, eventually caused her destruction.

"Surely, my dearest Mariana," observed Elena one deliciously cool evening, while busied with the glittering embroidery—"Surely Soto Mayor will soon return?"

"May the Holy Virgin grant he may!" replied the other; "and yet I sometimes feel," she continued, "as though I dreaded his presence here."

"Blessed Mary!" exclaimed her friend, "dread his presence here, Mariana! what mean you, my fair cousin? for of a truth your words sound to my ears so strangely in contradiction to what your deeds appear in my sight, that I know not how to reconcile the incongruity."

"Nay, nay, dearest Elena," quickly answered Mariana, "you mistake me sadly, or rather I should say, your astonishment is only feigned, since you cannot imagine it possible I should feel otherwise than happy when with my affianced husband."

"So I should have imagined—and in fact so I ever thought," was the reply; "but did you not a few seconds back declare that occasionally you felt as though you dreaded his return?"

"Truly said I so, my dear Elena," observed her cousin; but the only dread I anticipate is connected with this, to me, ill-omened Banner."

"Why call you it so, Mariana?" was the reply, uttered in apparent astonishment; "had I deemed it possible that you considered a task imposed on you by Soto Mayor in the slightest degree irksome, I should have been the very last person to urge you to the task."

"Of that I am confident," replied poor Mariana; "but the only reason instigating me to the work was the knowledge that Soto Mayor would be gratified at my having exerted myself to please him."

"And yet, Mariana," observed the artful girl, "knowing as you well do, the manifold dangers which a betrayal of the secret would bring around him, have you not been somewhat rash in thus embarking in so hazardous an enterprise?"

"Hazardous I allow it truly is," answered Mariana, "but on me alone can the punishment fall; what connexion has Soto Mayor with this bit of gaudy silk? how can a discovery of its existence implicate him? No, no—until he unfurls its splendour to the breeze at the head of his brave partizans, this Banner remains with me, and consequently should it ever be known that such a standard has been wrought, none can be fixed on as the offender save myself."

"But suspicion will indisputably be fixed on his name," remarked Elena.

"Suspicion is not proof, cousin," was Mariana's reply; "besides, his known absence from Granada would go far to point out how little he can have participated in the matter."

"Of that I do not at all feel certain," remarked Elena, "but be it as it may, your confession—for confess you must—will soon drive away the frail protection with which you would willingly surround him."

"*What* confession?" eagerly demanded the handsome Spaniard.

"Nay, Mariana," reprovingly interrupted her friend; you need not be so energetic in your manner. I merely meant that with all our good resolves, how frequently we are compelled, through circumstances, to act far differently from what we had determined on, when the danger appeared far off."

"Go on," quickly remarked Mariana, speedily reassuming her former equanimity, "go on, Elena, I pray you, for as yet I understand you not."

"No!" exclaimed the other in a tone of astonishment—"do you not understand my meaning? Well, to be more explicit, then, what I would convey amounts to this—do you not suppose that means *could* be put in force to extract from your reluctant lips information which it may be in your power to give—do you not think *that* possible?"

"Mean you," exclaimed the other, "whether I think it possible that through any measures which human ingenuity might devise, I could be brought to criminate my future husband—is that your question?"

"Your words convey my exact meaning," was the reply, "as though I had spoken them myself."

"You needed not to have asked the question," said Mariana, as casting up her splendid eyes towards Heaven, she meekly placed her hands across her bosom, and mentally vowed that should so horrible an alternative ever occur, to perish, rather than by word or look betray the man whom she had chosen as her partner through life.

With secret, and not well-concealed satisfaction, did the wretched traitress view in the look of fixed resolve so vividly expressed in the angelic countenance before her, how well all progressed for the attainment of her diabolical plans, yet did she deem it necessary to add one more trial. Though well aware of the noble heroism of her cousin's character, still there was the fear of *one* result which might be looked for as a consequence of pertinaciously withholding the knowledge sought, calculated to strike terror into any mind—how much more so into the bosom of a young and gentle woman.

"Have you," commenced her questioner, "Mariana, have you ever thought of torture?"

"Mark me," exclaimed the noble-hearted girl, rising from her seat: "Elena, you have known me from my infancy till now;—I do not think you can call to mind an instance where punishment or fear of pain has ever induced me to turn from what I looked upon as the line of conduct it was my duty to pursue?"

"True, my dearest cousin," retorted the other, sharply, "readily do I acknowledge, and none will bear more willing testimony

to your merits than myself, but," she continued with a sneer, "the question I propounded just now did not regard your many excellencies so much as it touched upon that most dreadful of all inflictions—torture."

"Torture the most refined—pain the most excruciating—humiliation the most degrading, never could wring from my lips the word that would bring disgrace and ruin upon my betrothed. But let us change the subject, Elena; this is a theme I care not to dwell on, and may we hope, as I sincerely pray, that so horrible a vision as that you have conjured up, never may assume the appearance of reality. But why pursue so terrible, so dreadful a subject? let us rather look forward to the brighter side of the picture, which by the blessing of the holy Virgin, I trust may be our lot."

"So be it," replied her companion, and without again recurring to the subject, the beautiful cousins continued at their task in silence, until their other duties compelled them to deposit the unfinished work in its accustomed hiding-place,—an old and massive chest.

To no one save the two relations was the existence of the Banner known, and so cautious were they in taking every measure calculated to prevent disclosure, that Mariana regarded it as next to impossible that the secret could by any means transpire. Alas! poor girl! she little knew that the friend, the dear companion of her childhood—the beloved relation in whom she confidently trusted, was at that moment plotting, not only against her happiness, but her life.

But a short time back, and had it been even whispered to the now treacherous Elena that but a very brief period would elapse ere every kindlier feeling in favor of her cousin should be rooted out, and hatred, deadly hatred, planted in its place, she would have spurned the vile aspersion as the basest calumny,—as malicious as it would be impossible to come to pass; yet that period *did* arrive, and as the miserable girl communed with her own heart, and ere the last gleam of virtue scudded from her bosom, struggled, though faintly, against her all-absorbing passion, she felt it was impossible to drive the demon from her heart, and finally relinquished the struggle as fruitless.

Abhorring with unfeigned detestation the iniquitous sway of passion which Elena de Santaguella allowed to enthrall her, still it were impossible to withhold our pity, when we dwell on the agony she must have suffered when first made aware of the awful precipice by which she stood.

Unwilling to admit even the shadow of the possibility of so preposterous an idea, that it were within the bounds of credibility that she, the true and faithful companion of her beloved

cousin, should eventually attempt to supplant that too confiding relation in the tone of her affianced husband, Elena de Santaguella, unheeding the danger to which she was exposed, never thought of averting the dreadful consequences until the veil was torn from her eyes, and she awoke to the unwelcome knowledge that the flimsy plea of friendship could no longer be made use of as a substitute for love.

The mental anguish which she must have undergone during the painful conflict between right and wrong—between passion and duty—must have been terrible indeed; but when at length the destroying angel claimed the victory, and seized upon his willing prey, every sentiment of honour, every feminine feeling was uprooted from her bosom; yet who could suppose that so beautiful a casket as was the almost angelic form of Elena de Santaguella, was but the receptacle of passions worthy of the arch fiend himself?

From appreciating the mental excellencies in Soto Mayor's character, the enthusiastic girl speedily learned to gaze with pleasure on his personal attractions. An interest in his well-being once created, an attachment speedily ensued, and as readily ripened into love—not that pure, holy love, of which to be the chosen object strews the rugged path of life with the most beautiful and delicious flowers;—not that soft, fervent, and unalterable affection, which to possess, far exceeds in value all the blessings which wealth, rank, and honour can bestow; but that fierce and unscrupulous passion which, rather than turn for an instant from its course, would cast aside every propriety of society, every fear of God or man, so that the accursed object be attained, let the price be what it may at which the indulgence be obtained.

That Soto Mayor should become hers, Elena was resolutely determined, but as long as Mariana lived, she well knew the small chance existing of his affections being turned into another channel; yet how to get rid of Mariana, and leave the object of her atrocious love unscathed? It were a difficult task to accomplish, still the prize was too valuable in her eyes to be readily surrendered without a struggle, yet was it utterly impossible to achieve her end as long as her young cousin lived.

To this, therefore, was it, that the cunning of the traitress was exerted to learn from her own lips what possibility there was of torture ever being able to wring from Mariana confession of any participation of her offence on the part of Soto Mayor, and from the conclusion she arrived at on that memorable evening, she resolved to put in execution the vilest cold-blooded piece of treachery ever enacted upon earth.

CHAPTER III.

THE "*Corregidor*" or chief civil magistrate at Granada, at the period I treat of, was Don Antonio Ybanez, bigoted to the last degree as regarded all political matters, and zealously devoted to the then ascendant dynasty, which, as already shown, so very many of the nation were as resolutely averse to. Various and frequent were the opportunities afforded this ill judging functionary, for persecuting to the utmost all those against whom either proof or suspicion rested of favouring what was by some termed the liberal party, but by their opponents stigmatized as factious rebels. It was not to be ascribed to want of perseverance on his side, that, hitherto, the victims whom he had entangled in his toils boasted not of aristocratic blood, but while he hesitated not to attack the defenceless, even though guiltless of any crime beyond what he was pleased to imagine against them, he cared not to trouble the nobles with his over-officious zeal, without being able to produce good and sufficient reasons for interference.

Mere supposition of disloyalty without proof to maintain the accusation, he was well aware might bring himself into trouble if acted on, and as this most worthy officer took as lively an interest in his own advantage as he did in that of any other persons, he contented himself with watching for some tangible opportunity, when he hoped to fix upon offenders of yet higher rank than those who had hitherto experienced his tender mercies.

Fully alive to the benevolent intentions of the Mayor, all who were engaged in the contemplated revolt were naturally doubly cautious in furnishing any visible pretext, by demonstration of which Don Antonio might think himself justified to meddle.

Much and deeply did the *Corregidor* ponder on the feasibility of detecting any one of those noble families against whom his active suspicions had long been raised; indeed, so virulently malicious was he on this subject, and so pertinaciously energetic were his measures, that he was regarded as an object of detestation, and hated by all those who embraced a different line of politics from that which he advocated.

There were others within the walls of Granada, and attached to the same side, to the full as unbending as the Mayor, and being for the chief part men holding appointments under government, were naturally anxious for the continuance of the

then *regime*, since, by a change, they would indisputably lose *all*, without having the most remote chance of gaining *any thing*.

To these colleagues it was the wont of Don Antonio to look for aid and support in the execution of any of his vindictive and tyrannical oppressions, and it is a matter of some doubt to the present day, whether the injudicious persecutions which Granada was daily made to witness, did not materially bring about that consummation which the Chief Magistrate was so willing to suppress, by the exercise of that very system of cruelty by which it was nourished.

Be that, however, as it may, Antonio Ybanez persevered in his course, and well judging from what quarters he could rely for support, he hesitated not in resorting to measures calculated to justify any attempt which might be made to resist them.

From the fearful anarchy and disorder which then spread through Spain, it was deemed necessary to invest certain officers of trust with authority far surpassing the limit which should have been assigned, and, therefore, was it that the greatest of all power—that of depriving a fellow-creature of existence—was vested in the hands of persons who, through prejudice and virulent party spirit, were the least calculated for holding so awful a responsibility.

So important a functionary as the Mayor of Granada, and so zealous a supporter of the Executive as he proved, was not likely to be overlooked when investing certain officers with the power of taking life, and by none was the boon received, who had less inclination to distribute impartial justice, than by Don Antonio Ybanez; not that the right existed in his own immediate person, without reference to others, but the necessary quorum to insure a verdict was so small, and the influence of the Corregidor over the minds of his colleagues so great, that, virtually, it may be said the sentence rested solely with himself.

Such was the man who, one afternoon, while seated in the "*Patio*" of his mansion—his mental energies directed towards the attainment of his great object, and his corporeal powers occupied in inhaling and ejecting volumes of smoke—received from the hands of a domestic a small note, but so fully engaged was the public officer with his own cogitations, whether pleasant or otherwise, that the document remained unnoticed as long as his cigar remained unfinished, for deeply interesting and most vitally important to a Spaniard must that business be, which can divert his attention from that luxury. But at length the "fragrant weed" was consumed, and, as if dismissing his cogitations with the evaporation of the smoke, the Mayor of Granada, emitting a deep sigh and cloud of white vapour at the same time, rose from his recumbent position, and while in the

act of leaving the *Patio*, his eye encountered the neglected *billet*.

It is a common habit with many, on receiving an unexpected despatch, to study and examine the seal and superscription, as if by those means the knowledge as from whence and whom the letter comes, would be more readily obtained than by perusing the contents; and so it was in this instance, for most marvellously unlike anything that usually fell into his hands was the missive then before him. The description of correspondence in which Don Antonio had most knowledge, generally came in the shape of large official packets from Government or his colleagues, or as the case might be, small dirty scraps of paper, despatched by some of his murderous satellites and spies, containing matter more approaching to what they knew he would gladly believe, than to anything resembling truth.

But the note in question was evidently forwarded from a lady, and so very remote was the period since the worthy functionary had created a spark of pleasurable feeling in the breast of any woman, that conjecture was wholly at a loss, as to who could have written it.

At length having exhausted surmise, Don Antonio Ybanez removed the envelope, and had he previously been acquainted with the contents, or had conjecture led him to anticipate what the substance of the information it contained could have been, the cigar, cogitations, and the easy chair would long since have been cast aside in favor of the small epistle.

His first impulse was instantly to despatch a domestic to summon to his presence two of the least scrupulous and most devoted of his allies, which having done, the Corregidor again and again perused the few lines which he held in his hand, but regarding which, it was evident he could not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion.

The two worthies destined to complete the trio at the council were, Don Jose Martinez and Don Juan Acentio, fit and willing coadjutors of their chief.

"My friends," exclaimed the Mayor to his wondering guests, breathless as they were by reason of the haste with which they had obeyed his call—"my friends, from this small note, which I received some time since, but little conjecturing the contents, I have but just opened, it would appear that the main object of our unceasing anxiety is about to be attained—that one of the leaders in this most atrocious conspiracy will, at all events, fall within our power; but read the information as I got it, and then judge for yourselves;" and, so saying, Don Antonio placed the paper before the astonished Señors, and thus ran its contents:—

"If you would know the prime mover in the anticipated revolt, promise solemnly in writing that you will not by word or deed endeavour to trace, discover, or inquire who your informer may be: a person will be at the third pillar of the South aisle of the Cathedral, at Vespers to-morrow, to receive your reply."

Long and seriously did the Conclave deliberate and surmise, as to whom, in probability, they were indebted for the important information received, but wide indeed were their conjectures from the truth. The high rate at which they appreciated their own consequence, forbade the idea that by possibility the letter had been written as a hoax, rather than as an important revelation; and as the only apparent means by which their awakened curiosity could be satisfied, and their party feelings pandered to, was to obey the dictate of the writer, by conforming to the proposed terms, they resolved to accept the assignation at the Cathedral, and the demanded stipulation was instantly drawn out and placed in the hands of a trusty emissary, for the purpose of being handed to the figure whom they confidently expected would be ready to receive it at the appointed time and place.

The result more than exceeded their most sanguine hopes, but, as the sequel of the narrative will reveal, well would it have been for all parties concerned in the accursed plot, had they allowed the common dictate of humanity to have swayed their actions, rather than have lent themselves as participators in a deed, for which they have justly been classed amongst the lowest description of ruffians, who at any time have disgraced the annals of a country. Had it been possible for them to have foreseen the dread retaliation which their vile cruelty would bring upon themselves, far differently would have been their conduct, but goaded on by many of the vilest passions of which our nature is capable, they rushed towards their undefended victim, with that brutal thirst for blood, which, when implanted in the breast of man, renders him a more formidable opponent than the savage denizen of the forest.

* * * * *

"I regret, dearest Mariana," remarked the handsome Elena de Santaguella, two days subsequent to the receipt of the note by Don Antonio and his colleagues, "I regret, dearest, that I cannot aid you in your labours this morning, but having received a message from my aunt, whom you know I dare not offend, I am obliged, however reluctantly, to spend the day in far less agreeable society than my dear cousin's."

"Indeed, Elena," replied the poor unconscious victim, "it would be most selfish on my part were I to expect the happiness I derive from your companionship to last for ever. Deeply am I already indebted to your kindness in having aided me thus

efficiently with the Banner; and now," she added, raising it triumphantly on high, "it requires nothing more than the small piece of fringe being added, and then welcome, doubly welcome, will Soto Mayor's arrival be, knowing how delighted he will prove at the expedition and success of our work."

"True, dearest," replied her companion, though with her countenance averted she gazed into the street, yet heedless of the many objects which there met her eye. "But tell me, Mariana," she continued, with a desperate effort to appear calm, "tell me whether you think the banner will be finished to-day, for if you doubt it in the least, I will forego my intended visit, and will remain to aid you rather than incur the chance of Soto Mayo returning and finding the standard but in progress."

"Thanks, dear Elena—a thousand thanks, but on no account shall your good, kind aunt be deprived of your society through suit of mine. No, no; what remains to be done I can easily accomplish ere dark, and then I trust to merit your approval for my diligence when you see me again. God bless you, dearest—farewell;" and throwing her beautifully rounded arm on her companion's neck, she fondly kissed her ere they parted. As if by instinct Elena returned the embrace, but no sound escaped her lips—no responsive smile played round her well-chiselled mouth, but rapidly she hid her countenance in the ample folds of her dark *mantilla*, and turned towards the door, but ere she crossed the threshold, for an instant she stood as if irresolute before she quitted the apartment. Once her graceful figure seemed as though about to return—for a moment her lips moved, and who may say what the result might have been, had not her eyes fallen on the calm, dignified, and placid features of her friend. In that one glance the fate of Mariana was sealed; hatred, revenge, and the malice of disappointed love rushed to the aid of the traitress, and without further look or word, she rushed from the house.

The die was cast—the fiat had gone forth; but who would barter the greatest mental anguish which they may fancy it possible to suffer, for the conflicting pangs which tore that proud woman's breast during those few brief moments?

Guileless herself, not a shadow of suspicion crossed Mariana's mind of the existence of the dreadful tragedy then preparing, and of which it was destined she was to prove the victim, for never having harboured a thought in her gentle breast which could in any way militate against the happiness of a human being, the idea that it was possible for others to contemplate injury towards herself, never entered her thoughts.

Far otherwise was her mind engaged, for while she exerted herself to complete the remaining portion of the work which

would render the Embroidered Banner perfect, and during the time that her small taper fingers were curiously threading the complicated mazes of her labour, her imagination carried her far from the spot whereon she toiled at her dangerous task.

Naturally she reverted to the expected happiness dependent on her beloved Soto Mayor's return—fondly she pictured to herself the possibility of events coming to pass without bloodshed, which were so interwoven with the anxious desires of the many; the probability that Government would in some degree relax from the unbending determination they had hitherto evinced in enforcing their decrees; and then, should Heaven so bless her country, the young enthusiastic girl pondered on the anticipation of years of unalloyed happiness which, with her beloved husband, she dared to hope might be her lot to share.

Poor Mariana, would that I could tell the melancholy story of your sufferings with one half the pathos with which the circumstances were related to me! yet what avails it now? nothing can reanimate that once more than lovely form, and nothing now remains unattained which vengeance may claim as her due. Awful indeed was thy fate, Mariana, and awfully hast thou been revenged.

Noon was passing rapidly away, but still toiled the beautiful girl at her task. The gorgeous Banner, emblazoned with the approved watchword of the patriot band, rested its many folds of rich silk and glittering gold on the couch beside which Mariana plied her needle. One portion of the standard was in her hand—the last remaining addition was on the point of being added to her labours, as the crowning finale of her work, when, almost heedless of passing occurrences, so wholly absorbed in mental reverie had she been, she suddenly started from her seat, uttering a half stifled scream, as she felt the pressure of a heavy hand laid upon her arm.

One glance—one instant was sufficient for the betrayed victim to comprehend the extent of her danger; the grasp which arrested the progress of her delicate work, was the savage gripe from the fingers of Don Antonio Ybanez, and at his side stood his two vile coadjutors, while many of his base myrmidons rushed hurriedly within the room.

THE WAKING HEART.

BY MRS. ABDY.

"I sleep, but still my heart wakes ever."

SWEDISH SONG.

THE life I lead, methinks, is blent
Of swift and strange transitions,
Part in the world of man is spent,
Part in the world of visions;
Loved forms around my pillow keep
A watch that ceases never,
And thus, although I seem to sleep,
My heart is waking ever!

On early friends my eyes I cast,
Now banished to a distance;
Hopes long extinguished, joys long past,
Start to a fresh existence;
Lips that have ceased to glad my ear,
In smiling welcome sever:
Kind words I breathe, sweet strains I hear,
My heart is waking ever!

Then deem not I can lay aside
The ties of true affection,
When ceaseless rolls the rapid tide
Of vivid recollection;
Sleep may my senses strive to close,
But vain is the endeavour;
My active thoughts defy repose—
My heart is waking ever!

SWISSIANA.

CHAPTER XV.*

THE TALE CONCLUDED.

MARGARET.—But it is moist, this hand ;
Wipe it off. A red brand
Like that seems blood, I own !
O God ! What hast thou done ?
Sheathe, O sheathe, that sword
At thy loved one's word.

FAUST.—Let the past be past :
Why hold me fast ?

MARGARET.—No, thou must yet remain,
And the graves I will explain,
Which, to-morrow, thou must see.
My poor mother, she shall be
In the best place ; near her lay
My brother,—a foot away,
Not further, me,—and on my right breast
Lay my little cherub babe to rest."

From a MS. translation of "FAUST."

THERE WAS a long pause after the words of the accursed ; at the end of which the stranger seated himself once more, and leaning on the rude table, buried his head in his hands. Trude and her husband regarded each other with looks of significance, and the latter filled and refilled his cup several times during the reverie of their entertainer. This one, then, raising his head slowly, bent a glance of commiseration on the unfortunate pair, and asked if there was nothing he could do to assuage their grief, and alleviate their distress.

"In troth there is!" exclaimed Kunz, in no very grateful tone ; "if you have money, lend us some."

"As for money," answered the other, without noticing the authoritative manner in which the request was couched, "yes, I have enough ; but I would do more than lend it. Meantime,

* Continued from page 139, vol. 1v.

compose yourselves; before to-morrow God may send still greater help."

"Yes," returned the innkeeper, with a sneer, "yes. Help! to-morrow? Heaven! how?—or rather hell!—"

"You make matters worse by your fretting, Kunz," cried his wife.

"Yes; I am ever doubtful." Then to the stranger, "You hold a middle course between the sorcerer and the priest, and I like not having to do with either of them. Hold now! Your wine is good; but tell me how you happened to scale these mountains in a night like this?"

"The history of my life is a dark one," replied the stranger.

"I am sorry for it,—you are then a comrade of mine," and the speaker gave a mocking laugh.

"When I was a child, like your absent son, in an unlucky hour I took the life of a fellow-creature."

"Ho! ho! and how did you happen to do that?"

"Do not open that heart-wound; it already begins to bleed," cried the stranger, with melancholy. "Pursued by the phantom of crime, I fled. At Berne I entered into the service of a gentleman, as groom. Owing to my good looks, and my being a compatriot, he indulged me with his confidence, although he knew nothing further of me. He was a captain in the Swiss regiment, which was cut to pieces on that terrible day at Paris. He quitted his country with regret; however, duty called him, and he must fight for the persecuted sovereign. He departed, and I had to accompany him to Paris."

"And there, everything was *pêle mêle*; no authority; nothing but terror and confusion," remarked Kunz.

"Figure to yourself all the glaciers of the Alps in motion, which, hurled the one against the other, fall crashing into the valleys, overwhelming the shepherds, who turn not pale, but contemplate coolly that frightful havoc, and even kindle fires of joy on the edge of the precipices open at their feet! Retrace this picture, and you will have seen Paris at that time."

"Then you saw our countrymen, the Swiss guards, perish in the combat round the Tuileries?" inquired Kunz, pulling his chair closer to that of the stranger, and with a look full of interest.

"I saw that night which was the forerunner of so much misfortune! It was a night in summer; it was dark and starless, as if it had extinguished its lights to hide its terrible deeds * * *. I, an accursed one, I cannot nerve myself to describe that night—the eternal symbol of the malediction of a people."

"Well, pass it over, then," said Kunz.

"When our brethren had fallen far from their country, in the

service of a king whose vassals they were not, but to whom they were bound by honour and an oath, and who was sacrificed before the palace of his ancestors,—of a king himself the crowned father of his people, and who died by the hand of his children
* * * *

“Such a thing can easily happen in this world at the instigation of Satan,” interrupted Kunz.

“My master, whom I had succeeded in saving through a secret door in the Tuileries, being unable to support any longer the tyranny of the rabble, resolved to fly to another part of the world. Our common misfortunes, as well as our common country, linked us to each other. My restless character, charmed with a change of place, and more, the truly strong attachment that I felt for him, would have made me follow him to the end of the world. We embarked with the little he had saved in current coin for St. Domingo; and, after having surmounted many dangers, we reached our destination.”

“Then you have really crossed the wide ocean, and seen the New World?” cried Kunz, with some wonder.

“And folk are very happy there?” inquired poor Trude.

“Yes, when they are sound here and here,” answered the stranger, pointing to his heart and then to his head. “Without that, it is the same in the New as in the Old World. My master purchased a sugar estate, and I became daily more attached to him. I caught the yellow fever, and he, whilst nursing me was attacked by it, too; he died in my arms. My master’s plantations fell to me according to his will, and I soon became rich, but not without a heavy heart. When we are tormented by conscience, all the wealth in the world cannot extinguish that burning flame which consumes our very mind.”

Kunz whispered a few words in the ear of his wife, who made no reply either by sign or speech, but bent her eyes mournfully on the stranger. He continued:—

“Yet a faint ray of hope would spring up now and then after these thoughts of gloom and despair, just as the hen spreads her wings over her brood when the vulture is about to pounce among them, or rather, as Mercy shields us with her buckler against the shafts of an ever active vengeance. I was always buoyed up with the hope that I should one day find in my country pardon of my sins. In imagination I heard in the distance the lakes and falls of Switzerland cry, ‘Come, come to us!’ The bold glaciers, seeing my torments, seemed to say, ‘We will relieve thee, come!’ And the sheep-bells of the Alps appeared to tinkle miraculously, and call, ‘We are the children of peace, come!’ My stars showed me the way from the New to the Old World. ‘Tis thus that I return to surprise my

parents, whom I have not beheld for twenty long years. I bring much wealth with me from the New World. I have left my mule at Kanderstäg, whence it shall be fetched to-morrow : then, like the prodigal son, I will try to obtain, instead of the curses, the blessings of my parents. And from to-morrow I hope to begin within their arms a new and better life."

The stranger having ceased, Trude rose from the table, and retired into the other apartment to prepare his couch. In her absence the innkeeper questioned his guest rather narrowly. He inquired where his parents lived ; whether he had ever met with his son, Kuruth, during his travels, and on being replied to affirmatively, he entered into particulars. The other informed him that he knew his son well, and that he had expired within his arms during the French Revolution. Trude now returned, and informed the stranger that his couch was prepared.

"Good night to ye both," said he. "All will soon become distinct and clear, both misfortune and malediction."

"Rest in peace," replied Trude, who lighted a lantern for the other, and pointed the door to his chamber, into which he immediately retired.

The antechamber was divided from the principal room of the inn—if inn it can be called ; a house of entertainment for man and beast, verily, which hath neither wherewith to nourish the body nor comfort the frozen limbs—by a thin partition of lath and plaster, as has been described in the earlier portion of this story. A few minutes after the departure of the stranger, Trude rose from her chair, and applying her eye to a chink in the wall, watched his movements in the other room. Her husband seemed to have a greater sense of honour than she, though his brain was considerably dimmed by the heavy potations in which he had been indulging, for he reproached her for her meanness in thus acting the spy. She paid no attention, however, but communicated the result of her observations to her husband.

"Now he is untying his belt ; he has laid it on the table ; it seems well filled."

"Ay ; and, I dare say, the man he stole it from will never have another heart-ache," muttered Kunz.

"What do you mean ?" said his wife.

"Go to bed with you," cried he, sullenly.

"He is speaking to himself," continued Trude, without heeding the other's commands ; and it is about the gold."

"Come, be off with you," repeated Kunz.

She disobeyed no longer, but quitted her unworthy position, and proceeded to lie down for the night. In the midst of this

occupation, she suddenly started, and in a tone of trembling joy, cried,

"Kunz! a thought has struck me! If this stranger should be the son we believe dead! If it were he returned! He has ever been dear to his mother. Oh! forgive the passion of a mother."

But Kunz, in his cups, could discern no such sentiment: he grew angry with his wife, and pushed her roughly from him. She retired sorrowfully to the other end of the chamber, stretched herself on some straw which laid there, and was soon asleep. He remained at the table, testing well, if quantity could do it, the quality of the stranger's wine. But even his potations failed to drive away the sense of his situation from his mind. He could not help dwelling on the morrow, when he should be led to prison. To prison! ah, it is an awful night, and the owls cry outside for shelter! This house is a house of woe, where crime follows crime, and whereon weighs the curse of father upon son. No one can taste joy here: and shall this proud stranger be the sole? He has money—gold! Well, well, let him keep it: I have got his wine. But thou, O wine, could'st thou not preserve one from a prison? Preserve me! the stranger's gold—that alone can save me. Ho! what demon of hell inspired me with such a thought?"

While such was passing through the brain of the drinker, his wife began to speak aloud in her sleep. She began reciting an old Swiss ditty, the peculiar tenor of which arrested her husband's attention. It ran nearly as follows:—

"How comes thy sword so red, Edward?
I have slain a vulture with my sword;
'Tis that which makes it so red."

Kunz cried out to the sleeper, who awoke.

"You have been singing," said he.

"I!" exclaimed his wife, rubbing her eyes.

"Yes: the song of the slain vulture."

"Ah! that song has been haunting me all day."

"Does not the *réfrain* run—

"I have struck my father dead,
'Tis that which makes my sword so red?"

And the blame, woman, is on your head!"

"Yes," replied Trude; "but come to bed: I am so frightened."

"In a little."

"Well, I will get up till you retire," returned she, rising from the couch, and coming forward. The sound of something falling came from the adjoining cabinet, that of the stranger. The peg on which his clothes were hung had given way: he immediately hammered it in again, which so shook the thin partition of the two rooms, that the knife attached to the wall on the other side gave way, and fell with a clang at the feet of Trude. The poor woman was startled: but Kunz darted from his chair, crying,

"Did not that man say he was a murderer?"

His wife returned no answer.

"He said that he had committed murder. Such an one is an outcast, and on his head lies a prize! Every one is free to punish him, to rob him; for do not both the law and the commandments say so?"

"Husband!" cried Trude.

"I might even kill him: no one would forbid me. Every one may do so with a murderer."

"Ah, Kunz, Kunz, beware!"

"Come, wife, no noise: I will not do it. I only wish—there is no time to be lost. He is a thief; that's evident. Perhaps he is even a sorcerer. Such folk are dangerous to the state. I should just like to share his booty."

Again poor Trude cautioned her husband not to let such thoughts take possession of his mind: but he would not hear her objections. Seeing remonstrance useless, she told him to follow his own feelings in the matter.

"Then light me," said he. She raised the lantern from the table with one hand, and with the other supported herself on the shoulder of her husband. He advanced softly towards the door of the closet, in doing which, he stumbled on the knife which had fallen. He gave a hollow laugh, and picked it up.

"Ho! ho! I have you then, old friend."

"You would not take the stranger's life, Kunz?" muttered his wife, trembling.

"No—no—you do not understand. I was a soldier once upon a time, and learned to take precautions. A weapon like this is always useful."

They both continued their approach. They entered the stranger's room.

"Do you not smell a grave?" said the man, with hesitation. But perceiving the purse of gold, he collected his courage.

"I see his purse under the pillow. There—take it."

"Never," cried Trude.

"Ah! you are ashamed. Well, it is not honest, I confess—

nay, it is even dishonest. Don't you think, wife, it would be better to return?"

"Ah! good angel, strengthen that idea!" murmured she.

"Yes," answered Kunz, putting the knife in his belt; "yes, let us die without crime. Without crime?—No—that is impossible."

Astride the threshold of the stranger's chamber he stood undecided, when he was aroused from his meditation by the clock, which gave out the hour—*eleven—twelve*.

"It is midnight," whispered he to Trude. Then to himself; "Complain not, old father, what is done, is done."

"Oh! come—return," and she drew him back. He followed her, and opened the door, but he quickly closed with a look of terror.

"What is the matter?" said Trude.

"Oh! did you not see the old man seated in the arm chair, all blue, stare at me with a menacing look?"

His wife opened the door, gently. "I see nothing," said she.

"Remain," cried Kunz, "remain," and he drew her closer to him. "I am afraid—come nearer—there now. He is calling—do you hear—the stranger I mean? Listen! his gold, it also is cursed. Do you not hear? He calls me; come then."

"It is the owls which cry," said Trude.

"No! it is his gold which cried. I ought, I will save myself, I will escape the prison. Look how he smiles in his sleep—he is mocking us. Ought such an one, alone, be rich—taste pleasure? And I, am not I also flesh and blood? Am I not a man? Have I not fought bravely in battle, whilst that assassin there committed his midnight thefts? No," cried he, loosing himself from his wife who tried to restrain him, "no, I must save myself, yes, save myself, though I should repent it for ever."

He rushed forward to the sleeper's couch, and seized his purse. The stranger started up.

"Cursed sorcerer!" cried Kunz, "thy gold is mine."

"Thieves! assassin!" and the other laid hold of his collar. The innkeeper tried to get free, and enraged at the other's violent hold, seized his knife, and plunged it twice within his adversary's bosom. "Assassin yourself," roared he, "take that—then!"

"I!—*your son*," cried the stranger, relaxing his hold, "and you my father—you give me the death wound—you send me to the last home!"

The murderer staggered back, horror stricken, and Trude, with a piercing cry, raised the wounded man in her arms. —He

collected all his strength, and drew a paper from his bosom. "Yes; I am—'tis true," gasped forth he—"Read!" and he fell back exhausted into his mother's arms.

The unhappy Kunz seized the paper, with a trembling and hurried hand, and approached the lantern. It was a passport. He read:—"Kurt Kurith, of Schwarrbach."

The paper fell from his hands. "Ah! cursed that I am, I have slain my son!"

"Your father has just forgiven you," said the dying man, "you have expiated the curse."

The unhappy innkeeper threw himself at the other's feet. "And you—do you pardon me?" cried he, with anguish.

"I do," was the feeble reply.

"And will Heaven forgive me?"

"I surely believe it will!" saying which, the murdered man fell back, and expired in his mother's arms. Kunz rose from his kneeling posture.

"It is finished," exclaimed he. Let heaven's will be done! I willingly suffer what I have so richly merited! I rush to deliver myself into the hands of justice. And, when the axe of the executioner has done its duty, God be my judge! From him nothing is hid!

* * * * *

Let us here draw the curtain on this unfortunate day—The Twenty Fourth of February!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VALLEY OF THE KANDER.

"Come forth! the sun hath flung on Thetis' breast
The glittering tresses of his golden hair;
All things are heavy with a noonday rest.—"

HON. MRS. NORTON.

THE *vive voce* perusal of the foregoing "tale of horror" occupied a considerable time, as I had to make a running translation of a tale whose plot and conclusion were as novel to me, as they probably were to my little audience. When I reached the *dénouement* only, did it strike me that I had before heard of a

similar catastrophe, and after some quiet cogitation with dame Memory, I felt satisfied that the tale was borrowed from the French. I have since endeavoured, but in vain, to discover where I could have read it. However, it matters little. Mine host grins when I question him regarding the authenticity of the narrative, and laughs "sans peur" or "sans reproche" when I ask him if he is descended from the unfortunate family. He evades a direct reply; says that the *brand* has not stuck to him, and as for the *curse*, why since the book was written, his business has increased a hundred-fold.

The story had varied effects on my travelling companions; it interested all deeply, but from different causes, according to the distinction of mind and character. The *pater familias* had his own civic notions of the tale. Like a man of good common sense, whose whole life had been spent among the crowd, and who felt like that crowd, he condemned the narrative, while confessing that it was a very extraordinary one, if true. Was he not right? His good wife, on the contrary, expressed a different opinion. She had never, she said, had a great love for the marvellous—she adored "tales of thrilling interest"—she did not care a fig for the new and genteel school of novelists. What she liked was a story-teller such as Mrs. Radcliffe, who really gives one scenes out of the common—now a ghost, now a trap door, now a skeleton—and yet so natural, that the last volume explained all; and what had appeared in the course of the story utterly improbable or impossible, was by that lady's magic wand turned into charming truth, and elegant reality.

"This," continued Mrs. T—— "while it 'arrows the feelins,' and renders them, through excitement, pliable and ready to receive any strong impression in the end, is adroitly used by that excellent novel-writer, for the furtherance of morality and choice sentiment." Such being her tastes, she feels it her duty as a woman to give her entire approval of the tale which has just been read, even though such an opinion be at variance with that of her husband.

"And you Miss T——," enquired I of the young lady—"are these also your sentiments?"

"What my parents choose that I should hear, it will always be my pleasure and duty to obey," said Emily, in the most charming and modest tone possible. There was a slight turn of her rosy lip, however, which, while it gave utterance to the speech, seemed as if it sneered at its own work.

Let one of her own sex speak for her then; and, reader, judge how eloquently!—

"To transfer the terrible destiny of the house of Atreus to people of the lower ranks of society, is to bring the contempla-

tion of crimes too familiarly before the eyes of the spectators. The splendour of rank, and the distance of ages, give to wickedness itself a species of grandeur, which agrees better with the ideal in art ; but when the knife is presented to you instead of the poinard ; when the situation, the manners, the characters, are such as you may meet with every day, you are frightened, like children in a dark room, but it is not the noble horror which tragedy ought to awaken.—Still, however, the potency of the paternal curse, which seems to represent a providence upon earth, agitates the soul very forcibly. The fatality of the ancients is the sport of destiny ; but fatality, in the christian doctrine, is a moral truth, under a terrifying form. When man does not yield to remorse, the very agitation which that remorse makes him experience, drives him headlong to the commission of new crimes ; conscience, repulsed, changes itself into a phantom that disturbs the reason.”

It was about noon when my old fashioned companion joined me at the porch of the inn of Schwarrbach, accoutred, like myself, for the prosecution of our journey. The English family intended to remain a few hours longer in their present quarters, much to my regret, for, to say nothing of the parents, the young lady and I had already, thanks to the thunderstorm, become so mutually communicative, and on such intimate terms, that I should have been hard as adamant, could I have bid her adieu, without a pang of sorrow. But 'twas this the Parcæ ordained !

“Female women,” cried Mrs. T.—“could’nt walk farther than this, so it is not to be imagined that Emily and myself are to trudge on to Kanderstäg, after having ascended the Gemmi.”

This was true ; there was no denying that the young lady and her mother had acquitted themselves bravely ; and, although a roseate tinge shaded the cheeks of the former, still over-fatigue might dissipate the colour.

Ah ! ye London belles who sigh for beauty in a ball-room, and content yourselves with its *familiar—rouge* ; take example from my young and fair companion, who marched up a mountain of seven thousand feet in height, and gathered roses on the way ! When I see a girl waltzing violently in a crowded saloon, in the precincts of Mayfair for instance, I always call to mind the exploits of Emily, and long to kick the monkeyish partner away, usurp his place by the dancer’s side, and give her a brushing walk in the neighbouring park or gardens.

When we had crossed the threshold and emerged into the path, it was like a plunge into the realms of winter. Although the month was July, everywhere we turned our eyes snow met

their gaze; there were even patches to be found in the hollows which line the road. The descent to Kanderstäg did not commence till we were fully two miles from the inn, in the mountain. Our route lay over a broken country, interspersed with huge stones, and channelled with small mountain rills. The valley of the Kander burst very suddenly into sight. After skirting a snow-capped mountain on the south side, we came unexpectedly upon a forest of pines, when a new region and a new climate breathed around. High over the tallest pines might be seen the valley, stretching out far to the north; on the other side, a ridge of enormous snowy mountains rise abruptly; in the centre winds the river Kander, which the eye can follow in its course till it reaches a green hill, from out of which seem to spring the steeple and house-tops of the village of Frutigen. All this country is the Oberland Bernois, of mixed religion, but chiefly Protestant.

The path through the forest to Kanderstäg is exceedingly steep; nothing can be more varied and more lovely than the glimpses of scenery it affords. It twists like a corkscrew, now leading to the side, when you catch a view of the snow-capped mountains of the Oberland, and now stretching out in the opposite direction, where nothing but vegetation and summer pictures meet the eye. On your right is the arctic, on your left the temperate, zone.

We met no travellers on this road. A few peasants passed us, decked in their holiday gear, for it was Sunday, and gave us the "good-morrow," in German. The last time I had heard the salutation it was in French: a snow-peak had caused the change, both in language and religion, just as in these regions it often does the climate.

When Kanderstäg came in sight, and before entering the village, a splendid gorge opened up on our right. It was not unlike the valley of Cluses, which we have seen described in a former portion of this tour, and, I should say, was of equal grandeur and extent, though from a cursory glance it is impossible to speak accurately on this point. I have since been in conversation with a Swiss gentleman who had penetrated into its depths. He found, he says, the peasants very primitive and patriarchal in their manners, simple in the extreme, and, although bordered on all sides by the world, scarce one of them had been to Kanderstäg, certainly none farther. This gentleman drew me a picture of his excursion, which in vain I can depict here. His account transported me some centuries back into the history of the country, and awakened within me a feeling of romance which linked itself with the names of those mighty heroes who laid aside the ploughshare to seize the sword,—who at

Morgarten, Sampach, and Granson, met the lances of Austria and Burgundy, and put them to a shameful rout.

The inhabitants of this valley my friend found to be, one and all, hospitable. He lived among them, in their own simple style, for the space of two weeks; he accompanied them to the chase: he joined in their sports—generally bowls, and throwing a stone, in the manner of quoits; and had in the end so attached himself to their manner of living, that it was only by dint of promises speedily to return that he was enabled to tear himself away. Pedlars are the sole race who penetrate into such out-of-the-world valleys, and there are many such in Switzerland as yet untrod by stranger; and I have often thought that, could one of these itinerant dealers be induced to unpack his budget of stories, as readily as he displays his wares, or opens the contents of his wallet, we should learn some lessons of primitive humanity which, in these worldly-wise days, would prove refreshing as a shower in Spring. This is no imaginary description. The economist or politician may cry out against it as a picture of a bygone day, but not as one of the present mercenary, trafficking Swiss; yet he judges merely from the haunts of tourists and the post-roads. Let him, like my friend, penetrate into some of these retired valleys, out of the beaten track, and he will learn the truth of what we say.

At Kanderstäg we refreshed ourselves with ale and biscuits. The weather proved excessively warm in the Plain, so we gladly availed ourselves of the hostess's invitation to step upstairs and there discuss our cheer. There was not a soul about the inn save ourselves, which circumstance I remarked to an attendant as betokening want of custom or bad times at Kanderstäg. He replied that, if we chose to wait an hour longer, we should see no lack of guests, but that, at present, all the village was on the rifle ground. In effect, as we were paying our reckoning, and had slung our knapsacks across our backs, a party of peasants rushed past the door, chasing one another upstairs, and threw themselves on the benches and tables in the upper room, overcome with heat and fatigue. We met several other parties outside the village, all bound in a similar direction.

I was much pleased with the appearance of the houses in this canton. They completely realize the structure which our minds have been accustomed to associate with the name of Swiss Cottage, and I cannot describe them better than by stating that they are counterparts, on a large scale, of those models which form so elegant an ornament to the furniture of a drawing room in our own country. On nearly all these dwellings are carved passages of Scripture, and in a central spot beneath the

gables may be read the patriarch of the family and the date of the building.

On the high road from Kanderstäg, which we now trudged along under a broiling sun, is seen to best advantage the Blumlisalp. It is well styled *The Flower of the Alps*, for in beauty and a certain solemnity of grandeur it surpasses, in my estimation, all its sister Alps. Even the first glimpse of Mont Blanc, from the bridge at St. Martin, did not more deeply excite my awe and wonder than the view we now had of the Blumlisalp. Picture to yourself, dear reader, two worn and weary travellers on a dusty road, marching under a scorching sun. They turn an angle of a rock, and lo! a fair and lily-white mass rises to their sight—a mountain of sparkling snow, pure and unsullied. You will then understand with what astonishment I beheld the Blumlisalp, and pardon my present enthusiasm. Circumstances give a tinge to all the affairs of this life, and what one man sees under one aspect another views in a totally different light.

There is a legend connected with the Blumlisalp, as pretty as it is extravagant,—in fact, throughout the whole Oberland Bernois, well nigh every spot has its story of fay or spirit,—and as the Swiss are decidedly not a *poetical* nation, this circumstance only strengthens the more those lines of Addison, which state that—

“Not a mountain rears its head unsung.”

The legend of the Blumlisalp is, that this mountain was formerly covered with flowers instead of with snow. That a rich and powerful prince had his dwelling on the summit, and loved a ewe lamb so extravagantly, as to dispossess his old mother of her habitation and portion to give to his woolly favourite. One day the queen-mother, now a poor, infirm old woman, through age, and the many afflictions she had endured, trudged up the mountain, crutch in hand, to ask an alms of her royal child. But he commanded his guards to thrust her from his gate, and show her the way down the mountain again. The old woman departed, muttering curses on her ungrateful and unnatural son, and as quickly as she descended, came the snow from heaven, which completely enveloped the palace and domains of the cruel prince, destroyed him, the pet lamb, and all his household, and from that day to this has ever remained on the mountain.

About two hours after passing the Blumlisalp, we reached Frutigen, a large Bernois village, built almost entirely of wood, very clean and picturesque in its appearance. The inn was crowded with holiday people; there was dancing and games of every description going on: but we had no difficulty in obtaining comfortable rooms, as the guests were merely villagers,

spending their Sunday in sociality and amusement. *Horresco referens!* we witnessed a fight between two viragos; not an English bruising match, but a succession of scratches, kicks, and abusive language. After dinner, we strolled outside the town as far as the village church, when we sat down under a tree, and enjoyed a beautiful view of the valley. All here was a complete contrast to the scene at the inn. We heard the *kuh-ruh* playing its wild notes near us, and saw the herds obeying its call with alacrity. Altogether it was an enchanting scene, and we were sorry when the approaching shades of evening stripped it of half its beauties, and compelled us to return to the inn.

SONG.

WHEN evening's shade around is thrown,
And day's dull toils are o'er,
'Tis then we deem the time our own,
Nor dwell on labour more.
The hours should glide by merrily,
When Phœbus sinks to rest;
As flowers of night are said to be
The sweetest and the best.

Though some may trim the midnight oil,
To count their worldly gains:
What care we for their golden toil,
Their pleasures and their pains?
We speed the bowl and troll the glee,
Let what may come to pass;
We'll wake the night right merrily,
And drain the sparkling glass.

R. H.

THE SECRETARY.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK," "GUARDS, HUSSARS, AND
INFANTRY," "THE BEAUTY OF THE RHINE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.*

"FALSTAFF. 'And with a thought seven of the eleven I paid.'

P. HENRY. 'Oh, monstrous!—eleven buckram men grown out
of two.'"

KING HENRY IV. PART I.

THE London season was now fast drawing to a close. Parliament was prorogued—the last vouchers had been issued from Willis's—the trees in the different squares actually put forth leaves; and all betokened the approach of that period when, for a person of any fashion to be seen in London, would be tantamount to an expulsion from society.

The doors of the Opera-house were for the time sealed. Balls, and suffocating assemblies, had passed away. Men who had moors hurried towards Scotland, much to the annoyance of the grouse; while others, unblest by the possession of some thousand acres of heather, took the liberty of quartering themselves on those who were. Nevertheless, some amusements remained to gratify the few whom business or duty compelled to linger awhile amid the haunts of their recent gaiety. And many were the delightful parties formed for water excursions to Richmond, or for the laudable purpose of devouring white-bait at Greenwich.

To admire scenery in the immediate neighbourhood of London, and to babble of "sweet-scented flowers" and "smiling meads," would, in the present day, be deemed amply sufficient for providing the delinquent with permanent apartments in Saint Luke's. Yet even at the peril of such a result, we cannot but confess that "a pull up the river," cockney as it may sound, has to us charms innumerable; particularly towards the end of July, when, satiated and unnerved with the constant round of

* Continued from page 430, vol. lv.

late dissipation, "the victim of society" escapes from the hot streets of the Great Babylon, and embarking on the bosom of old father Thames, speeds onward with or against the stream, and momentarily finds himself approaching a purer and more refreshing atmosphere.

All are not of our opinion, though some are, and among the latter we may reckon the honourable Mark Cooley. For on an exceedingly close and oppressive day, at the very period of the year we have quoted, the gentleman in question, accompanied by Colonel Handstop might have been seen wending his way leisurely towards Whitehall Stairs, where, having engaged a wherry, they desired the boatman to convey them towards Greenwich, it being their will and pleasure to appease their appetites with the great delicacies of the place,—*poisson de rivière* and white-bait.

Nothing was wanting to enhance the delight of the trip. The numerous pleasure-boats passing to and fro—the countless numbers of vessels from all parts of the universe, moored by the different quays—all gave life and vigour to the scene, added to which, Mr. Cooley, probably in compliment to the serenity of the weather, enjoyed an equal placidity of temper, and even the Colonel, under the influence of present amusement, coupled with the anticipation of an agreeable repast, thought proper to drop his dry caustic tone, and enter into conversation with a greater portion of urbanity than was his wont.

"Do you go to the moors this year, Cooley?" inquired the Colonel, as their boat sped rapidly along the smooth stream—"Capital season, so I hear!"

"Why, to tell the truth," replied the other, "I cannot call myself owner of as much land as would suffice a muir-fowl to lay her eggs on; and even if I were, never should I be able to discover the pleasure of living in a tent pitched on a barren heath, where it is either so cold as to stop all circulation in your veins, or else so awfully hot, that you never can again become cool, in place of inhabiting a good house, where every requisite comfort is at hand, and all your wants readily administered to. No, no, not I, by the Great Mogul!"

"But it does not at all follow, as a matter of course, that you are to be subject to such horrible annoyances, as you seem to anticipate," replied the Colonel, laughing, "nor is there any reason why you should sleep under canvass, even for a single night."

"Perhaps not," answered Mr. Cooley—"but, on the other hand, I conclude I should be compelled to rise every morning before day-light, and ride some horrid, rough, trotting brute, at least forty or fifty miles before I arrived at my ground.—No, no, my friend, I've had plenty of that sort of amusement in India, without seeking for it now—besides which, who is to pitch your

tent for tiffin? Where am I to look for all my necessary comforts? Who's to wait on me? Do you suppose these bare-legged savages could minister to my wants? Not they, truly. Why, my dear fellow, I assure you the very beasts in India would perform the duties of a servant better than those uncouth Highlanders."

"How do you mean, Cooley?" replied the Colonel, in a tone of slight astonishment. "How do you mean that *beasts* would better play the part of domestics? Surely you don't wish me to believe that the brutes of the forest not only play the parts of resurrection-men, but are trained to stand behind your chair at dinner, change your plate, and discharge all the functions of a menial?"

"Not exactly," was the reply, "although nearer the truth, than, perhaps, you imagine. I'll tell you what, Handstop—oh! well," he continued, observing his companion smile, "you may laugh if you please, but what I'm going to say is a fact—saw it myself, on my honour."

"Not the slightest doubt of it," chimed in his friend, in expectation of hearing another marvel, "but don't keep me in suspense, so now Cooley, let me have the tale."

"The matter was simply this," replied the Nabob; "one day I joined a party about to proceed on a shooting expedition—sun so awfully hot that all the soldier's buttons melted on parade; never saw anything like it; regular stream of metal. Adjutant's horse shied—threw his rider—pitched him in the fluid; of course burnt to death in no time. Well, as I was saying, joined the shooting party, bagged no end of game. I was dead beat, and while tiffin was preparing, I laid myself down to catch a few moments' rest. Well, sir, there I lay—scorching heat—parching thirst—dreadful craving for porter—determined to have some, and fortunately recollected that half a dozen bottles had been packed in a small basket for immediate use. But where was it? Servants all busy getting the curry ready, and cooling wine; no one near me, except two elephants. So what do you think I did? Eh! listen: I threw my head back, and held my hand up in imitation of a person drinking, and immediately pointed towards the people who were pitching the tents: off went one of the elephants, and in five minutes brought me the porter. Well, Sir, down he put it, opened the basket, took out a bottle, and then commenced searching every particle of the grass the glasses were packed in."

"Why, what was he looking for?" asked the Colonel.

"A corkscrew, of course," replied the other, "but he could not find one. So what do you think he did, eh?"

"Impossible for me to guess," was the response. *

"Not easy, certainly—well, I'll tell you. Finding no cork-screw was to be had, the animal craftily untwisted the wire with his trunk and having broken off the top of the cork, he thrust the remainder down the neck with his tusk."

"He was a well educated elephant, truly," observed the listener.

"Why, as for his manners, I fear I can't say much, for no sooner did he see me drink the porter, than he very quietly abstracted another bottle from the basket, poured half the contents down his own throat, and then handed the remainder of the beverage to be finished by his friend."

"I must confess, Cooley," remarked the listener, "that you possess the most marvellous collection of stories I ever met with; and to me the strangest part is, that during the recital of these wondrous tales, you never undergo the slightest change of countenance."

"Change of countenance!" echoed the traveller, "why should I change my countenance? You don't suppose I'm the colour of the man who was always walking about Madras, offering a lac of rupees to any of the faculty who could alter his complexion?"

"I never heard of your friend," was the reply, "but what colour of the rainbow did he chance to glory in, since he proffered so large a sum to get it changed?"

"Blue, sir, dark blue; saw him myself often—thousands of times."

"What! a blue man, Cooley—actually blue! were there any more of them? And where on earth did he come from?"

"Ah! there it is," was the answer—"he did not come from any place on earth, but from below the surface of it; strange, wasn't it?"

"Strange enough," said the Colonel; "but who, and what was he?"

"There's the difficulty," replied Mr. Cooley, "for no one knew *who* he was, or what he *had been*, but none could look on him without knowing *what* he *was*—deep blue, on my honour."

"Some poor devil, perhaps, who had taken zinc and minerals in the hope of curing fits, which turned the colour of his skin to a livid hue; that must have been it, Cooley," remarked the Colonel.

"Not at all," quietly rejoined the other, "though there were people in India who advanced similar opinions with yours, but they were soon quieted. Between you and me," he continued, in a rather mysterious tone, "I'll tell you where he came from."

"Where?" asked the Colonel, and in reply to the question, Mr. Cooley, drawing his mouth into a very small compass, and assuming a most mysterious air, pointed with his finger downwards.

"What!" continued the other, "did he come from the bottom of the boat, or the river; or where do you mean by your complicated pantomime?"

"Not exactly that," said Mr. Cooley, "but I'll tell you: you see a party of young surgeons at Edinburgh clubbed together and bought a subject. Well! the fellows they employed got what they wanted from a neighbouring church-yard, only buried that morning, brought it to the appointed place in a sack, took their money, and departed; then came the doctors, got a galvanic battery, charged it to the very utmost, made it much stronger than they supposed, applied it to the body, and up it got; some said it had been consigned to the grave when in a trance: however, what to do these doctors could not tell; the corpse was as obstinate as any man before death, and as for persuading it to re-enter its grave, and say nothing about it, they soon found that was impracticable. In short, never were people so puzzled. There was the blue body, all alive and well; but by no method or application could they alter its colour: terribly frightened they all were, until, as luck would have it, one of the party recollected he had a near relation who was an East India Director; so off he went, confessed the whole story, told his tale, and implored his uncle's assistance. And what do you think the uncle did?" asked Mr. Cooley, stopping the thread of his narrative. "Now, what think you, the old gentleman did?"

"Nay, how can I tell?" replied the other.

"Well, then, he gave the body a cadetship, and sent it out to India, and, for all I know to the contrary, it's at Madras at this minute."

"Better and better, Cooley," replied the Colonel, laughing, "it must be well worth a man's while to visit India, if he is to be rewarded by such strange sights as you have witnessed. But look there," he continued, directing his companion's attention to a four-oared boat containing a party, rapidly overtaking their small wherry—"unless I'm much mistaken, there's Dropmore and his everlasting shadow, Elms; but who are the others with them?"

The attention of the marvel-reciting gentleman being thus turned into another channel, he attentively scrutinized the occupants of the approaching boat, and in a very brief period was enabled to satisfy his friend upon the point.

"By the Great Mogul, Handstop, who do you imagine the stout looking gentleman to be? Why, none other than our old friend in Gracechurch street—he of the city. Surely you remember the day we dined there some months since? Strange medley, was it not? Good wine though—pretty girl his

daughter. Never asked me since—perhaps because I never called. Well, no matter; but what can Dropmore find so agreeable in the alderman's society, as to induce him to venture a whole day's existence in such company?"

"Money, I suppose, money—the old story: wonderful what strange things men *will do* for money;" and pondering possibly on the very many complicated acts which he had himself perpetrated in quest of wealth, Mr. Cooley crossed his arms and sunk into a most agreeable reverie.

In a short time the boat was alongside the wherry, when, however much the one party might have wished it, it was utterly impossible they could pass the other, without notice. As regarded Colonel Handstop and Mr. Cooley, it was to them a matter of perfect indifference by whom they were seen skimming along the smooth water in a Thames wherry; but the expression on Sir George Elms' countenance, when recognizing the vicinity of his two acquaintances, indicated no exuberant stock of gratification at the discovery. In fact, with his usual love of manœuvre and *finesse*, the baronet contrived the expedition in the hope of facilitating the progress of his views, and in the desire of speedily bringing to a conclusion the arrangements which, during the season, he had so sedulously laboured to effect. To this end, he persuaded Lord Dropmore to invite the worthy citizen and his fair daughter to dine at Greenwich, and determined that no other persons should interrupt his plans. The party, if such it could be called, was unknown to any, save the four persons concerned.

The labours of Sir George Elms during the season had been anything but expended in vain; for, although he had in some degree been unable to undermine the real affection which, at one period, Lord Dropmore entertained towards his cousin, still he had so far succeeded, as to render his friend, through doubts and jealousies, so eminently disagreeable, and even sometimes almost rude, that his presence was esteemed in Grosvenor Square as a circumstance less delightful than his absence.

So far his measures prospered; and as the estrangement of the relations was his chief object, he might well have congratulated himself on success, for so changed had Lord Dropmore latterly become, and so brusque and unsociable in manner, that Emily Beecher found it rather a relief than otherwise, when her cousin, as frequently occurred, did not make his appearance for days together.

So great and sudden an alteration might well have proved an enigma to Emily, but having once overcome the pain which his newly adopted conduct naturally inflicted, she ceased to ponder on the cause; and never having reciprocated in his feelings as

regarded his attachment, she troubled herself but little on the subject,—the surest proof of the rapidly declining interest which Emily Beecher felt in his behalf.

The habits and pursuits of Frederick Garston being so diametrically opposite to those of Lord Dropmore, it cannot be supposed, notwithstanding they dwelt under the same roof, that much companionship existed; and indeed so totally at variance were the modes in which they passed their hours, that it was seldom they met; yet was not the young secretary uncared for; for although treated with a *hauteur* bordering on contempt, and scarcely even deigning to honour his father's guest even by a distant acknowledgment of his presence, Lord Dropmore watched each action of his unconscious rival with the not very amiable determination of effecting, if possible, his ruin, but at all events his dismissal from the house.

Hitherto each plot laid for his destruction had been turned aside, and so unexceptionable had been the entire tenor of his conduct while residing with Lord Blanchard, that it had been found fruitless to attempt any detraction of his character to the marquis.

Still was Lord Dropmore determined to persevere; and the partiality which his cousin almost daily evinced for the society of her uncle's deliverer, was in itself sufficient to stir into a blaze the hatred which he cherished towards his father's guest.

As for Frederick Garston, so entranced was he in the society in which he now found himself domesticated, and so truly attached had he become to Lord Blanchard, whose undeviating kindness partook more of the feelings of a parent than of a patron, that thinking only of the rapture of the present moment, and daily basking in the glorious sunshine of Emily Beecher's presence, he did not perceive the web which was fast closing around him.

Such was the state of affairs in Grosvenor Square, at the time our chapter treats of.—And far as the conjectures of the marquis were from the actual state of his son's embarrassments, yet it was impossible but that some of the many rumours floating about, should reach the ears of one so interested in his welfare as his father. Once or twice had he questioned Lord Dropmore on the matter, but the conference ended in a far from satisfactory manner, having merely tended to convince Lord Blanchard that there *was* a mystery, but what the purport of the secret was, he found it impossible at that period to fathom.

Through the baronet's inducements, aided greatly by his friend's increasing admiration of Vernon's daughter, Lord Dropmore found himself more frequently in the vicinity of Gracechurch Street, than it probably had been visited by any of his

family during the existence of the whole of his ancestors put together. But a considerable degree of ingenuity was called for and exerted on the part of Sir George, in suppressing the impatience of the old merchant, at the dilatoriness of the proceedings, since, in Mr. Vernon's opinion, a bargain once struck, the sooner it was fulfilled the better; and concluded, he certainly imagined the engagement between his daughter and Lord Dropmore to be, and the most urgent arguments were obliged continually to be brought into play, ere he could be convinced that what might be extremely agreeable for the son, by chance might not prove equally acceptable to the father; and thus by continued shifts and promises, the baronet contrived to delude the alderman into a belief that Lord Blanchard was probably acquainted with the case, and that all that was required, was a brief period in which to insure his consent to the union.

Now, as our readers are aware, nothing could have been farther from the truth than this,—the real cause resting on the difficulty Sir George experienced in prevailing upon his friend to take that irrevocable step which must for ever alienate him from his cousin, and most probably insure the marquis's displeasure for life—not that the baronet valued either obstacle as of material import, since to him it mattered little whether the father and son ever spoke again, nor heeded he whether or wherefore the relations were separated for ever.

Yet fully to effect his plans, it was necessary to bring his friend to view the matter in a similar light with himself; but that he found to be no easy task, for however willing Lord Dropmore might have been to cultivate the good understanding which had sprung up between himself and the inhabitants of Gracechurch Street, yet he by no means felt prepared to surrender his personal freedom, and as he believed, detract from his rank, by forming a connection which would undoubtedly be reckoned by his friends as much beneath him. Yet exclusive of any feeling which he might entertain in favour of the daughter, there was the appalling amount of debt daily augmenting against him in favour of his future father-in-law, and as by his means alone had he been enabled to meet the heavy demands which in honour he was bound to liquidate, he still fluttered round the attraction, which he had neither courage to grasp nor strength of mind to flee from.

Such were the feelings possessed by the different persons then on their way to Greenwich,—all actuated by some deep and selfish motive, save the extremely beautiful girl who, seated by her father's side, ever and anon bent her gaze on the handsome countenance of her admirer, with an expression illustrating the budding attachment of a first and early love.

COMMUNE WITH THINE OWN HEART.

BY ROBERT M. HOVENDEN.

HE that would try his heart, and search out its alloy,
 Has one unerring test :
 What are his hopes and fears, his sorrow and his joy ?
 Are they the basest or the best ?

The greedy Prodigal : what craves he to inherit
 From his more worthy sire ?
 Is it a double portion of his father's spirit,
 As was Elisha's rapt desire ?

The worldly Profligate, who treads the slippery edge
 Of courts : what stirs his fear ?
 Say, can it be that unredeemed Baptismal pledge,
 For ever whispered in his ear ?

The seeming Penitent, when shame, at times, and grief
 His just tormentors prove :
 Like her that was a sinner, turns he, for relief
 And mercy, to the Saviour's love ?

[Thou nameless One ! His love from bondage set thee free,
 And stayed the uplifted rod ;
 On earth thou wast the scorn of the proud Pharisee,
 What art thou now ? A Child of God !]

The pampered Epicure : where is his purposed rest,
 Where garners he his joy ?
 Is it to lie, with Lazarus, upon his Father's breast,
 And share those feasts which never cloy ?

Who would assay his heart, and search out its alloy,
 No further let him seek :
 Are these his hopes and fears, his sorrow and his joy ?
 Let Conscience speak ! let Conscience speak !

CLARENDON;

A NOVEL.

BY WILLIAM DODSWORTH, ESQ.

CHAPTER XXXII.*

THE old man was up many times during the night, for he had grown restless of late, and could not sleep as had been his wont; every time that his short grotesque shadow came between Herbert and the firelight, the boy opened his large heavy eyes, and watched him with a dreamy interest. Herbert in fact never slept, for there was a strange gnawing pain hanging upon him, that effectually banished sleep, and made him as restless and much more unhappy than the old man really was. It had been coming on for several days; in fact, although he had paid but little heed to it whilst in the company of those two wild and lawless men, now that he had leisure and quiet sufficient to think, it terrified him so much, that more than once he felt the tears coursing silently down his wasted cheeks.

How his head throbbed with the wild fearful pain, as it lay on the coarse pillow, that, for all its poverty, smelt so sweetly of the wild thyme and the meadow-sweet! How that frightful pang made his little limbs writhe and toss, although he manfully strove to prevent himself from shouting out, and thus disturbing his weary yet generous hosts! How wearily he counted the deep, dull ticking of the old clock in the corner; and how every stroke, as it told the lagging hours, beat still more loudly on his weary heart! How he yearned for the daylight once more, whilst old Joe, crouching down over the dying embers on the hearth, became transformed into some horrible gorgonic shape, and his pipe glowed like a lurid star in the darkness; how the sighing of the wind, about the creaking cottage, struck a wild chill terror upon his soul, that all the tempests he had ever heard had not been able to excite; and how he strove to pray, and could not!

* Continued from page 445, vol. lv.

Nothing but tears! they could flow, if he could do nothing more, and they flowed freely enough.

Herbert was very ill! he whispered the terrible fact to himself twenty times during that miserable night, as if he would fain make the fact less terrible, by keeping it continually before him; he knew it by the throbbing head and aching limbs; by the spasmodic pains that thrilled him to the very soul; by the fearful phantoms that began to throng his mind. All the wild and appalling tales of murder and outrage he had ever heard, flocked through his memory; grisly phantoms with glassy eyes and gibing lips, mingling with old Joe and his pipe, the weary clock and the fitful glimpses of the every-day shapes around him the flashing firelight permitted him to see. At length, the real and the ideal was so strangely blended, that he scarcely knew whether he was the victim of some horrible dream, or was in his waking senses, and still the pain and the langour continued, and the fever mounted high within him.

Suddenly the old man was startled from his doze in the chimney-corner by a sharp wailing scream, proceeding from the low crib the boy occupied. He ran forward, exclaiming "God Almighty! what is the matter with the bairn? is't a ill, little 'un—is't a vera bad?" and his hand was placed tenderly on the burning temples of our poor little Herbert.

The boy's only response was a feeble moan. The phantoms were around him now; and there, in the midst of the loathsome ring, stood old Father Joe, every feature swollen to twice its usual size, and distorted with a terrific leer. Then came another cry, that made the room ring, and Jabez in his turn started up from his flock bed, a huge red tassel bobbing over his nose in his hurry.

"Is that thou, Father Joe?" he asked, in a frightened tone; for, notwithstanding old Joe's crusty temper, the young man really had an affection for him—"is that thou crying out, old 'un."

"No, its the bairn," was Joe's answer—"he be mortal bad, I fancy," and Herbert's feeble moan added emphasis to the assertion.

Jabez was beside him in an instant.

"Strike a light, wilt 'a" he said, quietly—"how long has he been ill?"

"I dont know as to that," was the gruff reply, for Joe was fast relapsing into the selfish peevishness that was habitual to him. I'd been up twice or thrice, as is my way, for I can't rest o' nights, Jabez, now that I'm getting old and asthmatic, and was smoking a pipe, when I heard him crying out first; I fancy, though, he ha' been ill for some time, for I heard him

writhing and tossing about as if he had the devil aside him, afore that."

Jabez took the candle, and held it before Herbert's face; there was a brilliant bloom over the thin sharp features, and the glassy eyes were encircled by a deep blue ring, that showed how rapid was the progress the fever had already made upon his boyish frame.

"Do you feel much pain, my little fellow," asked Jabez, gently, as he lifted him up in his arms.

Herbert moaned and shook his head, and they heard him whisper through those white, parched lips, a prayer for water, or he would be dead.

"Fetch a drink," said Jabez to his father-in-law. Is Nell asleep, d'ye think."

"Yes, and munna be wakened," growled the old man, peevishly; "poor volk cannot lose their night's rest in this way."

"Nell would sit up a week, and never give in to being tired," rejoined her husband, hotly; and then, raising his voice, he cried out—"Nell, old lass! I say, wife, welt a' get up and come here, my woman."

"Oh dear, Jabez! and Nell's head bobbed up over the board at the head of the connubial couch, "what is the matter, my man?" she demanded, in a sleepy tone.

"Matter! enough's the matter," growled old Father Joe—"the bairn that man o' thine would bring in last night is taking a dying fit."

"No! no! mother" retorted Jabez, gently using his children's epithet to designate the plump little body, that now came tumbling out of bed, exhibiting in its descent one of the neatest ankles and feet in the world—"he's only mortal ill, my pet, and I think we should have a doctor."

"A doctor!" growled old Joe from the side of his bed, on which he had now taken refuge; "and where are we to get enough to pay a doctor, and eight bairns of our own to keep."

"He will wait till we can pay him," said Jabez, quietly; "or if you think that 'ill be too long, there's the parish 'un."

"Parish 'un!" screamed Father Joe, rolling himself up in his blankets, "we'll have no parish keep of any kind here—Nell came into the world without un, and so did all the bairns, and nothing the parish sends shall ever come across this door, until I'm carried out of it." And a volley of growls followed up this determination of old Joe's, notwithstanding his parsimony, to have no keep from the parish.

Nell and her husband had, in the meanwhile, held a hurried consultation over poor Herbert, the issue of which was, that

Jabez instantly set off for the nearest doctor, whilst Nell, slipping on her gown and stockings, raked up the fire, and threw on a few logs of wood. This latter proceeding instantly aroused old Joe's wrath anew.

"Oh Lord! oh Lord, Nell, is thou not afraid of being frozen alone in thy bed, some o' these nights, for such shameful extravagance? Them logs ought to have lasted un a week, and there thou's burning 'em wholesale, and for what?—why, for a beggar's brat, who nobody knows."

"We must have some hot water, father," said Nell, quietly proceeding with her operations; "the doctor will be here enow, and a pretty pickle we will be in, if we have none; I never saw such a beautiful boy!" she murmured, as another moan brought her to Herbert's side for a moment.

"Billy was far bonnier!" growled old Joe, crustily; "poor Billy was much bonnier to my thinking.—Now what is the woman blubbering about, I wonder," he yelled out, in a kind of desperation, on seeing his daughter's tears begin to flow; "dost 'e not know that Billy is dead, safe enough?"

"Oh, no! no! no!" sobbed the poor creature, in a subdued tone; "Billy will turn up one of these days, you'll see."

"Pity if he does," growled the old miser, pettishly; "and then seven strong hungry bairns to feed wi' Jabez's poor earnings—seven, quotha! there's an eighth lying there," he muttered, indicating, with a wave of the hand, the crib where Herbert was lying. "How is the little whelp, Nell?"

"Very ill," sobbed the tender-hearted creature, hanging over Herbert; "he seems quite in a dream, and never opens his eyes, but just moans, moans enough to break one's heart."

"He'll die, soon:" mumbled the old man, between his teeth.

"Oh, father, how dare ye?" said Nell, in a terrified voice; "how dare ye reckon on a fellow-creature's death in that shocking way?—didn't the minister at church on Sunday tell us that to wish a fellow-creature's death, is next to being as bad as murder!"

"Poh! poh!" laughed the old sinner, scoffingly; "they allays tell un that;—if they hung un for such thoughts, there's never a man in all the world 'ud die in his bed.—There's Jabez, dower," he added, as steps were heard without.

Jabez at that moment appeared at the door, followed by a sleepy-eyed old gentleman, with a white head, and a benevolent expression of countenance. Old Joe was sitting up in his bed, with the blankets folded around him, for the scene was beginning to have a strange, absorbing interest for him.

The little group gathered around the boy's bed—Nell holding the candle, whilst the doctor felt the boy's pulse, and Jabez's

eager, honest face, thrust in between the pair, whilst Herbert lay to all appearance insensible, if not dying, beneath ; this was the picture his old bleared eyes were fixed upon.

"How long has the boy been ill, good people?" demanded the little old doctor, putting his hand to his ear.

"Not long, sir, we hope," said Nell, dropping a curtsey ; "we made bold to send for you, sir, directly we saw how bad he was."

"Quite right, my good woman," said the old doctor, blandly ; "but I think he must have been ill some hours ; however, that has nothing to do with the matter ; I'm afraid he's caught a very bad fever."

Something stuck in Jabez's throat, for a moment, for he was thinking of his children ; but he swallowed it manfully, and whispered in Nell's ear,—“We mun nurse him well, wife, and he'll soon come round.”

"Surely, Jabez, dear," rejoined Nell, truthfully, "we aren't beasts, to turn the poor little fellow to the door, I hope."

Old Joe gave a short, husky cough, as he saw what was passing in the minds of his son and daughter, rather from the expression of their faces, than from anything he actually heard.—“We must get him into a hot bath as soon as possible, my good people,” said the doctor. “Ah, I see you have plenty of hot water.”

Nell's honest face beamed over with good nature, as she answered in the affirmative. The doctor then bandaged Herbert's arm, and bled him, desiring Nell in the meanwhile to get a bath ready, as he would see him in it before he left.

"He has not the look of either of you, my friends," said the old doctor, noticing Herbert's luxuriant, jetty locks, and delicately chisselled features, which certainly corresponded but badly with Jabez's and Nell's flaxen hair, and chubby features.

"He's no bairn of ours, sir," cried old Joe, from his lair, all his splenetic humours called into full play, at this innocent observation ; "he was never across our doorway afore last night, more's the pity !"

"Why more the pity, friend?" demanded the old doctor, mildly.

"Why, because we be poor folk, mister, and have mouths enow and to spare to fill already," answered old Joe, eagerly, clutching the bed clothes in his thin, withered hands, as he spoke ; "and that's why I don't like to see that bairn lying there."

"Like it or not, you must learn to see him lie there, for

many days to come, friend," rejoined the other, quietly; "he is in a high fever, and to remove him, would be his death."

He said the last part of the sentence very emphatically, with his face turned to the old man, as if to fix it on his mind; the other did not reply, except by a low muttering, which none of them could catch, and so the old doctor went on addressing Nell:—

"Whatever you want, send up to my house, and you shall have it at once, from my cook.—I am an old man, and childless, and can better afford to feed the hungry than you can."

"Oh, sir," cried Nell, eagerly, "the poor little thing is welcome to bit and sup, as long as ever Jabez can earn it; it's not much poor folk like us can do, but that little I'm sure we blithely give to any one."

"Ower much of that," growled old Joe, sarcastically.

The old doctor laid his hand kindly on her arm,—*"You are doing angel's work, my good woman,"* he said, gently.

Nell felt that he was speaking approvingly to her, although she scarcely understood him how, so she only dropped another curtsy, and reiterated what she had already said; then the doctor took his leave, shaking Jabez and her by the hand, as he went.

"I'm sure he's a nice, kind gentleman, that, Nell," said Jabez, giving his wife the sovereign their late visitor had popped into his hand, at parting; "and as for the boy, he's welcome to the poor shelter we can give, as long as ever he needs it."

"Hush! speak lower, Jabez:" whispered Nell, laying her finger on her lip, as Herbert moaned, and turned uneasily on his bed. "Eh, but the fit's strong upon him enow."

"God, a mercy! what poor suffering things we are, Nell!" ejaculated honest Jabez, sadly; "and such a young bit thing, too!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN a week Herbert was so much recovered as to be able to sit up. It had been a time of unusual quietness in the house, for Nell had drilled her troop of healthy brats so effectually that they never ventured into the house but on tiptoe, nor dared to speak above a whisper when they were in it. It had been a week of dreadful pain and suffering to the poor little fellow,

and sadly worn and wasted was he when Jabez, who, with all his roughness, was the tenderest of nurses, carried him in his arms into the open air for a few minutes.

Herbert cast a languid eye over a group of sturdy brats who, in defiance of their mother's orders, were gambolling in the dirty road. Old Joe was sunning himself on a bench at a little distance, beside another old man, quite as grey and withered as himself, whilst far beyond the boy's gaze stretched the broad, blue sea.

"Isn't it a pretty sight, my little fellow?" cried Jabez, with flashing eyes, as he caught the direction of the boy's gaze; "look at the waves tumbling and tossing in-shore, with the great white horses foaming over them! and then look far out, how calm and still everything is, as if the sea was one immense sheet of glass, and never a breath of wind to stir it. Yonder's an Ingeeman standing out, with all her sails set, for the long voyage that's before her. They say the Ingees lies a six months' voyage off, my lad, and that's a power of a distance, in my opinion."

"I've read about the Indies," said Herbert, feebly, in reply to this outburst. "Once, when I had been very good, my dear papa gave me a book full of pictures of tiger and elephant hunts, and grand temples, and caves, and palaces, and cities in India; and the book said what a beautiful land it is, with palm-trees growing up into the sky, and coral islands lying deep, deep down beneath the green sea-waves. But it is a very hot place," he added, with a weary sigh, "and I don't like the heat, or I would go out there when I get better again."

He felt so light, so very light, in Jabez's arms when he said this, and looked so worn and wasted, that the latter thought he might never get better again. As he looked down upon him again, the moment after, there was so radiant a smile upon the young boy's face that he felt as if he had never beheld so much touching beauty in a human being before.

"Carry me back again, good Jabez," murmured the boy, faintly, as a sickly pallor chased the bright glow away, "for I am very, very ill."

Jabez carried him in, and laid him on his bed again.

"I am very light, am I not, my good Jabez?" said he, with one of his sad smiles, that always cut the honest fellow to the heart, whenever he detected them.

"Rather; but you will soon grow fat and strong again," cried Jabez, stoutly. "Bless you, Nell is such a capital cook that she could feed a skeleton up as big as a prize ox, in no time."

"I will make a good subject for her, then," said Herbert, gently, as he held up a thin, wasted arm against the light. "Has the doctor been here, to-day, Jabez?"

"Not yet, my boy, but it is almost his time, now. He will be delighted to see you looking so much better. Heart alive! it was only yesterday his housekeeper, one of the tidiest and nicest old women I ever clapped eyes upon, came down to see you, with a great basket on her arm, full of jellies, and potted meats, and wine. Why, it'll take you a month to eat your way down to the bottom of that basket, my man!"

Herbert smiled, for Jabez's chubby, grotesque-looking face had the most laughable expression possible upon it; and at that moment the little window was darkened, and Herbert, looking up, beheld the good old doctor standing before it.

"Is he better? can he walk yet?" cried the good old man, eagerly, turning his quick, grey eyes from the boy, lying on his bed, to Jabez, who was sitting before the fire.

"Oh, he's quite a different being, to-day, sir," answered Jabez and Nell, in a chorus.

The old doctor rubbed his hands, delightedly, and stepped into the room. Herbert's smile was really charming as he held out his thin, worn hands.

"Both! both!" exclaimed the doctor, laughingly, "are you so glad to see the nasty old doctor that you must give him both your hands?"

"Twenty, if I had them," said the boy, in a low voice. "You have saved my life, sir."

"Oh, pho! pho! nothing of the kind. God only did it, my child," rejoined the old man, lifting his hat, reverently. "Has Jabez had you out yet?"

"A very little bit, sir," said Nell, dropping her perpetual curtsy. "He's woondily weak yet, and can't abear to be moved much."

"Well, well, he will come to it by degrees," said the doctor, cheerily. "Time and patience work wonders."

"I am very grateful, sir," said Herbert, in his touching manner.

"I know you are, my boy—I've seen it from the beginning—and when you get well again I intend to reward you for it by taking you to live with me. Now, now, don't cry, for it's very foolish, and is of no good at all. But you must make haste and get better, first. I suppose Mrs. Dorothy keeps you pretty well supplied, eh?" turning to Nell.

"Oh yes, sir; there's a cold chicken, and two bottles of wine, and a jar quite full of jelly yet, and some strawberries. We have plenty to last us for some time to come."

"Very well; she musn't let you want, that's all. Good-bye, my boy," and he stretched out his hand to Herbert.

Herbert raised it to his lips, and as the doctor drew it away

again, he felt a tear fall upon it, which made him mutter something that none of them could catch; the next minute he was gone, and all felt as if he had taken the daylight away with him into the bargain.

"You shall have your dinner now, my pet," said Nell, the moment after. "What can you eat, dearie?"

"I have quite lost my appetite," said Herbert, quietly.

"Oh, but you must eat. Try a little jelly first," and Nell placed a cupfull on a small tray, and sat down with it on her knee at the bedside. "Shall I feed you, or will you do it yourself?"

Herbert shook his head at the latter proposition, for he was still miserably weak, and, besides, his hand was so unsteady that he would never have been able to hit his mouth, if he had tried for a week; so Nell fed him with the jelly, and then filled a plate with the tit-bits of the chicken, whilst Jabez sat and looked on quite as complacently, if not more so, than if all these dainties had been intended for himself.

In the midst of these proceedings old Joe came shuffling in, with his shoulders almost looking over his head, a sure sign that he had, as Nell expressed it, "the black dog upon him," or, in other words, was in one of his dreadfully bad humours.

"What's all this waste aboot?" he demanded, in his harshest tones, "there's them poor bairns fit to eat their finger ends off for hunger, and that brat feasted wi the daintiest to be had for love or money."

"Hush! for shame, father!" retorted Nell, without looking up. "It doesn't come out of your pocket or mine either, if he is, for Doctor Rivers sent them."

"But he didn't say you had to give that bairn all, Nell," persisted the old man, eyeing her with his malevolent eyes. "I'm quite amost as weak as him, and a glass of wine or so would do me a power of good."

"I'm sorry I can't give it then to you, father," said Nell, turning away her head and blushing. "Whether the doctor said it was all for the boy or not, I know he meant it was, and I'm not going to defraud any one, even for you. It's very hard that *you* should tempt me."

"Pray give him some of that chicken," said Herbert, feebly.

"I may give it to whom I please, dear Nell."

He had never called her dear Nell before—perhaps she did not even hear it now—and yet her voice was immeasurably gentler, although still quite firm, as she said, "No! no! no! if we were at the last bit and sup we had, I wouldn't steal what doesn't belong to me. Jabez, you had better take the old man away with you."

Old Joe threw himself down on the long settle by the fire, and, resting his chin on his stick, glared defiance at her from beneath his shaggy penthouse lids. Nell still continued her occupation, and when Herbert had at last, after repeated assertions, convinced her by shoving away his plate that he could eat no more, she quietly got up, and put away the remainder of the meat, etc., under lock and key, and then went about her every-day occupations in her usual quiet manner.

She scarcely noticed it at the time, although she remembered it vividly afterwards, how sullen and mute the old man sat in that dark corner during the whole of the afternoon. He declined Jabez's invitation to go down with him to the boat, although in general he rarely spent many minutes at a time in the house, when the weather permitted him to be abroad; but when tea-time drew near, slunk away, and did not come home again until nightfall.

He neither wanted bit nor sup, he said, when he did come home, on Nell asking him where he had been; and that was all he condescended to say before he turned in for the night, neither did he notice the younger children, as was his wont.

Mistress Dorothy came down in the evening, as usual, to inquire how Herbert was, bringing with her a picture story book, which she told Nell in a whisper, her master had bought on purpose that morning for the poor little fellow. Herbert was asleep when it came, so it was exhibited to all Jabez's children with great pomp and ceremony, filling their tender minds with the wildest dreams that had ever visited juvenile imaginations. Neither Jabez nor Nell could read; whilst Dorothy, who had been born before reading became a fashionable accomplishment, was similarly situated, so that they were quite at sea, as to the subject of most of the wonderful things they beheld.

When Herbert did awaken, however, he was literally besieged in his bed by the mob of juvenile pirates, who carried the doctor's magnificent present to him with all the pomp and ceremony of some magnificent triumph; and then with a perfect sea of heaving heads around him, amongst which even Jabez and Nell's were visible, the boy explained all the pictures, by reading the short story attached to each.

It was very fortunate that the good old doctor himself did not chance to put up his appearance, otherwise a rebuke might have been the consequence for these eager inquiries after knowledge; as it was, Nell at last noticed the exhaustion visible on Herbert's pallid countenance, and immediately drove the tumultuous mob out into the road, and restored the cottage to its pristine quiet.

It was some time before Herbert could compose himself to sleep after this, so much had he been excited by the gift of the

good doctor; he did, however, fall asleep at last, and slept long and soundly, until long after old Joe had come home and gone to bed, as we have described.

He was aroused by a strange scuffling noise very near him, but so weakened both in body and mind was he by his long illness, that it was fully five minutes after he had first heard the sounds, before he became so thoroughly conscious, as to be aware of what was actually occurring beside him. When he did open his eyes, he saw by the uncertain fire-light—for there was no candle burning—that two people were standing near him. One of them, who was crying bitterly, he on the instant knew from her voice to be Nell.

"Oh get into bed again, and pray to God to forgive you, miserable wretch!" were the first distinct words Herbert heard her utter—"do you hear, or shall I call up Jabez, and expose you to him, by telling him what horrible thoughts possess your mind."

"Whist, woman! whist!" croaked the asthmatic accents of old Joe, struggling to resist her sturdy grasp. "It was all a mistake, I say again, and I was only walking in my sleep."

"Walking in your sleep! and I found you with your hands upon the boy's throat," retorted Nell, in a clear low voice. "No! no! father—lie and cozen as you will, I know you. God help me that I should say it! I know you, I say, too well for that. I tell you I was just in time to save you from committing murder; and if you don't instantly to bed again, I will arouse Jabez."

"We have many mouths to fill, Nell," whispered the old man, pathetically, "and we are so very, very poor."

"If we had twenty more, and twenty more to that again," retorted Nell, boldly, as she planted herself stoutly between the bed where Herbert was lying, and the old man, "I would not turn the poor thing to the door, no! even if I knew I should want for it to-morrow myself. And now, father, to bed."

"I will! I will, Nell,—you won't tell Jabez I walk in my sleep," whispered the old man.

"No, I will not," said Nell, whose pale face and white dress were, at that moment, disclosed to the boy's gaze, by a flash of light from the fire. "But if ever you dare to walk again, I tell him on the moment."

"I won't walk again, girl, I give you my word for it, I won't"—said the old man, feebly, as he tottered off to his lair. "I'm getting old and feeble, Nell; and I can't sleep o' nights as I used"—and, muttering and crooning to himself, the old sinner rolled himself up in his blankets, and soon pretended to be asleep.

Nell then threw herself along the foot of Herbert's bed in such a manner, that it was impossible any one could molest him, without arousing her, and was soon, notwithstanding her recent agitation, sound asleep.

The drowsy god, however, did not so soon steep Herbert's senses in forgetfulness. His mind, enfeebled by disease, was too hopelessly filled with the dread of all he had learned during the last few minutes, to permit of that; and, like all young people, he had an overwhelming terror of violence in the night, which his career of the last few months had certainly not tended to eradicate.

For hours he lay on his hot, rough couch, tossing from side to side, as every moment suggested a new terror to his mind. At one moment, he would imagine old Joe was creeping across the floor to pounce upon him; and then the fear would be chased from his mind, and a new, yet not less strange fear came upon him, as he began to doubt even Nell and Jabez, who had been so kind to him; and so he lay quaking with apprehension, until his exhausted faculties could hold out no longer, and he at last fairly fell asleep.

It must have been noon when he awoke, for the mid-day sun was shining bright and cheery into the little room, driving away, as if by magic, all the terrors of the previous night. The good old doctor was sitting in a chair by the bedside, watching him, and immediately Herbert opened his eyes, this kind-hearted being took hold of his little thin hand, and said, in a cheerful voice:—

"My dear good little boy, I have come to take you to my house, now that you are getting so well again."

Herbert shrank away from him, and hid his face.

"Your good friends here," continued the doctor, turning to Jabez and Nell, "have given you up to me for a time, and so I have ordered my man to come down to carry you away from them for a bit; now, now don't cry, or I shall think you don't want to go, and that would distress me very much."

"Oh! I do want to go, dear sir," sobbed Herbert, throwing himself into the old man's arms; "and pray don't believe that I am insensible to all your kindness."

"My dear little fellow, I can imagine all you would say; but here is my man come for you. Weasel, carry this little fellow home, and mind you wrap him well up with the things you have brought. Has Mrs. Dorothy prepared the little French bed in the blue room?"

What a delightful vision of his little bedroom at Delaval, did the last few words conjure up to Herbert's mind.

"Everything is quite ready, sir," quoth Weasel, who certainly

did not belie his name, as far as looks went, as he was by far the sharpest, thinnest man, you ever saw—"shall I roll the young gentleman up in these blankets?"

"Young gentleman!" Herbert's head rolled round with the long forgotten words, and he began to dread that it was all a dream, which could not last—and then Doctor Rivers went on, with his calm voice.—

"Yes, I think you had better, Weasel; he is very light, poor little fellow!" and he sighed.

"Oh! we'll soon fatten him up, sir," cried Weasel, stoutly. "Why, bless you, if you only saw all the jellies, and fruits, and rusks, and potted meats Dorothy has been a-making in anticipation of his coming, you would grow fat with only looking at them. It's nothing but stew, stew, stew, from morning till night, with her, sir."

Herbert was confident he was the victim of some strange delusion now. Why, if it were not, did Doctor Rivers incur so much trouble and expense for a poor unknown outcast like himself?

"Softly, softly, my good Weasel," said the old doctor, smiling blandly: "you are really too imaginative."

"Imaginative, sir!" echoed the indignant Weasel. "Why, bless you, not I! I just popped my head into our pantry this morning——"

"To get a snack, Weasel, eh?" inquired his master, silyly.

"Why, then it was, sir," rejoined Weasel, with a humorous twinkle in his small, bright eyes, that looked as sharp as needle points: "but I'd no sooner poked my head in, than I felt a surfeit in a moment, and couldn't eat one bite, if it had been to save my life. I was mortal hungry by dinner-time, too, sir."

"I should think you would be, Weasel," said his master, gaily. "But now do give those brains of yours a little rest for a time, and work your bodily members instead."

"Just the very thing I was going to do, sir," rejoined Weasel, whose huge lantern-jaws seemed perpetually in motion, whilst they certainly produced what Brother Jonathan calls "everlasting talk." "When my body's at rest, my mind is at work, and *vice versa*; the mind has had a spell, and now it is the body's turn." And this practical philosopher, without another word, whipped Herbert up in his arms, and would have carried him off like a flash of lightning, had not Nell rushed between him and the door, insisting upon a parting kiss from Herbert before her little patient left her house.

Herbert hugged the little chubby woman in his arms, and received a smacking kiss in return, whilst he gave Jabez his hand, and then Mr. Weasel darted off once more with his precious

freight, leaving his master to take his leave of his humble friends when and how he chose.

"Come up to-morrow evening, both of you," said he, forcing gold upon them; "Weasel knows you, and won't deny you, and you shall spend an hour with your little favourite. I quite approve of your wishing the boy to be in safer keeping than you can afford him."

"Oh! sir, never, never mention that," sobbed Nell, passionately: "your age and your grey hairs gave me confidence to tell you what might have happened last night had I not awoken to prevent it; but never let a word of it escape your lips."

"You may depend upon me," said the doctor, with grave kindness. "Your father is very old; and, at his age, the heart and the judgment alike get warped, or he never could have dreamed of such a crime: and now I shall look for you to-morrow night, remember," and he took his leave.

Old Joe slunk in as soon as the good doctor was out of sight. Joe had been a Deal pilot, and still retained all the rough vulgarity of those wild, but daring men. He had once or twice distinguished himself rather favourably for his intrepidity in saving some shipwrecked wretches from what seemed inevitable destruction. But latterly, as the old doctor told Nell, his heart had become warped, or hardened, rather; and, as an old age of poverty, but not of want, closed in upon him, he became that most miserable of human beings—a griping, hard-fisted miser.

He glared round the room, knitting his shaggy brows as he searched first one corner, and then another, without discovering what he sought; and then, going up to Nell, he said:—

"The bairn! the bairn, Nell! what has become of him?"

"Doctor Rivers has taken him," said Nell, looking firmly at him.

"But we are so poor, Nell," he whined, grasping her plump round arm in his wiry fingers.

"Just what I said, father, when he came, and he said he was an old man, and childless, and wanted something to love, and to teach to love him: and so the boy has gone with him."

"And without paying us, Nell," groaned the old miser, smiting his breast: "poor folk like us."

Nell was already engaged with her household work, and did not answer him. Old Joe groaned, and wrung his hands, and then, having satisfied himself that Herbert was really gone, he slunk out of the house, and crawled down to the beach, to see if the tide had sent anything in the shape of wreck up from the last night's storm.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DALTON and his two companions had in the meanwhile returned to England, and had travelled with all possible speed down into Hertfordshire.

"Our first interview must be with that villain Vernon," was Dalton's observation, as he drew up the window of the chaise, on leaving Southampton; he is the source of all the evil; and dearly will I repay him, for all the mischief he has done! God grant it may not yet be too late to repair it, as far as poor Herbert is concerned."

Cecil sighed, and leaned back in the corner of the chaise, for Dalton's words called up a host of fears to his mind, scarcely conscious of breathing, so painful became his feelings, as every moment lessened the distance between the enemy of his family and himself.

Norman watched them both, as they sate opposite to him, each buried in his own thoughts, glancing from Cecil, whom he thought the very handsomest young man he had ever seen, for Cecil was very much improved since we last met him in England, and had, indeed, during his short sojourn in Paris, obtained the soubriquet of "the handsome young Englishman!" to Dalton, whose under lip writhed, as he indulged the gloomy train of thought that had come upon him.

"How very strange it is!" whispered Norman to himself; "had I met this Dalton by himself, and come upon Clarendon immediately after, I certainly should never have detected it, and yet there is such a wonderful likeness, as they both sit there—the bold, aquiline nose, and commanding curve of the nostril—the massy, yet handsome mouth—the ——"

"Mr. Macdonald, were you ever in this part of the country before?" demanded Dalton, breaking in upon his musings.

"I never was, sir," rejoined Norman, looking very guilty.

"I have an estate here, and should be happy if you could take a week or two's shooting, whenever you can spare time, over it," was the kind offer. "Gatcombe is a strange old place, and in very bad repair; but the battue is magnificent."

"I wonder if he guessed what was passing in my mind," thought Cecil, eyeing him furtively, after he had expressed his acknowledgments; "I almost think he could read one's thoughts, with that piercing eye of his."

"Poor dear Gatcombe," continued Dalton, abstractedly, in a low voice; "I have never been there since I was almost a boy,

and yet I remember it as vividly as if I had only parted from it yesterday. The long, low house, with the verandahs opening on the beautiful lawn, the lake, so bright and cool, gleaming like a silver star amidst the green verdure of the limes, and the pavilion, where my mother loved to sit and work the livelong day ——” and then with sudden energy he exclaimed: “We will return and stay at Gatcombe for a night, Cecil, my lad,”—and then his countenance darkened, and he added, “I wish to make you acquainted with a portion of my own early history, and which, in fact, intimately concerns yourself as well; and we cannot find a more fitting locale than poor, desolate Gatcombe.”

“Has it been long shut up, sir?” inquired Norman, who began to feel interested in the conversation; “with your keen love of sport ——”

“Who told you I was a sportsman?” asked Dalton, with immovable gravity.

“No one: and yet I can guess pretty accurately that you are.—You have all the fire and vigour in you that goes to make a good shot.”

“Admitted that I am; and once, Mr. Macdonald,” said Dalton, sadly, “I confess I loved my dog and gun as dearly as the best of you; and then I will answer your question.—An event of the most painful interest to myself occurred, which made the presence of the place, dear as it had been to me, in the highest degree distasteful. When once the current of feeling has turned, and we begin to dislike what we have formerly liked, our measure of disgust becomes powerful, exactly in proportion with our former affection. I had loved Gatcombe dearly, for it was the scene of all my youthful pleasures, and was endeared, doubly endeared to me, by the presence of the best of earthly beings; but when that event occurred, my love, as Byron has it, turned to hate, and I fled from the scene of all my hurried vows, with the determination of never setting foot within its precincts again.”

“And now you are about to break your vow?”

“I am: time has softened down the regrets it could not obliterate, and I can once more behold poor Gatcombe with an untroubled mind; it will, however, I feel, be sadly altered, for I have suffered it to go sadly to rack and ruin since then. It is twenty years ago;” and he glanced quickly over to Cecil, who was sitting, silent and abstracted, in his own corner, without hearing the conversation.

“What a time!” exclaimed Norman, shrugging his shoulders. “Will you not be afraid that the ghosts of all your ancestors will haunt you, immediately you set foot within it?”

Dalton laughed, painfully. "It was not an hereditary property," he said.—"My father bought it on my coming of age, although we had rented it for some time previous, and intended presenting it to me on my marrying."

"An intention I suppose fulfilled," observed Norman, carelessly. Dalton's features became suddenly convulsed.

"A sudden pain which I often feel," he gasped, on noticing Norman's look, and then he added, sadly—"No, Mr. Macdonald, I inherited it at his death, which did not occur for some years after."

Cecil looked up with sudden interest, for he had never heard Dalton talk so unreservedly of his earlier years.

"Was Camilla born there, sir?" he inquired.

Again Dalton's face became convulsed, and again he gave the same explanation. "We were at Genoa," he said, "when my daughter was born."

Norman eyed him furtively, for it struck him these spasms were caused by anguish of mind, rather than by pain of body; but Dalton did not give him a further opportunity of pursuing his suspicions, as he presently began to discuss the probability of discovering Herbert, and the three soon became engaged in an earnest conversation on this topic. Dalton, in the discussion that followed, puzzled Norman more than ever by the intimate knowledge he displayed of the various tricks and deceptions practised by the London thieves on the unwary, as well as an acquaintance with their haunts.

"I could almost fancy him a detective officer," he muttered to himself, as he again surveyed his companion's commanding countenance; "and yet when I look again, what is there from a prince downwards that he might not be? and yet Cecil is very like him!"

Not in his spirits at that very moment, however, for Dalton had unconsciously forgotten his despondency, and was now as gay and lively as he had before appeared morose and sad; at times, however, a cloud would overspread his majestic features, and then his whole appearance altered in a moment; no one, in fact, was more unlike himself or different than was Dalton. When the merry mood held him, he was the gayest of the gay, and not the elfin Puck himself could display a more tricky spirit; when sad or sullen he was like the terrific clouds one sometimes sees in alpine countries, charged with thunder and destruction. It was Norman's fortune to behold him in both.

Cecil, on the contrary, presented a lugubrious gloom, that made him the most miserable travelling companion possible.

Towards evening they reached the village adjoining Jasper Vernon's residence. Leaving the chaise at the inn, Dalton and

his companions walked up to the house, Cecil's impatience not permitting them even time to snatch a hurried dinner before doing so. They were shown into a dismally furnished room, which the fumes of wine told them was the dining-room, and a servant, bringing candles, said that Mr. Vernon would be with them presently.

He was longer in coming than even Dalton's stoical patience could brook, and when he did come he was not alone; a grave, dark man, with a sallow complexion, and hair combed straight over his forehead, accompanying him.

"I think, Mr. Vernon," said Dalton, who, it was agreed upon, should open the conference, without taking his host's proffered hand, "that our interview cannot be a pleasant one, and unless this gentleman," bowing to the stranger, who returned it in an awkward manner enough, "is a relative—"

"I never transact business except when accompanied by Mr. Sharp, sir," said Jasper, speaking with great trepidation. He was, in fact, so dreadfully unnerved, although he had swallowed almost a full bottle of wine beforehand, with the vain hope of acquiring courage by it; "whatever, therefore, you have to say, sir, must be said before him."

His auditor bowed, and said, "My name is Dalton, sir, although I daresay you are already aware of it."

Jasper Vernon also bowed, and, for the first time, ventured to look up. What he saw did not tend to reassure him, for there was something in Dalton's visage that filled him with indefinable terror; towards the place where Cecil stood, trembling with emotion, he did not venture to look, for he had already seen enough.

"We have come here, Mr. Vernon," continued Dalton, in a cold, clear voice, "from Paris, at your request, and on a very painful errand. As acting executor of the will of the late Colonel Clarendon, the care of Herbert Clarendon was committed to you."

Vernon bowed, cringingly, fawningly, and Dalton could have spurned him like some noisome reptile, but with a great effort he went on—

"That boy is missing, Mr. Vernon, and at your hands I demand him."

"Mr. Vernon would be most happy to comply with your very reasonable request, did he know where the boy was to be found, Mr. Dalton," said lawyer Sharp.

"When I address myself to you, sir," said Dalton, with freezing hauteur, "I will expect an answer, and not before."

"I was only going to observe, sir, in continuation," cried the lawyer, eagerly.

"One word more, sir," said Dalton, white with rage, "and I eject you by the shoulders from this room. If your employer there," pointing to his host, "chooses to have you to play the spy upon his guests, I, for one, will not allow you to address yourself to me."

"Sharp, be quiet, if you please," said Jasper Vernon, in a low tone, and then, without changing his position, he said, "I feel it a most unfortunate occurrence, Mr. Dalton, that poor dear Herbert should have disappeared so mysteriously. I am sure he always experienced the kindest treatment from every one in this house; and his tutor, especially, had his orders from me not to use corporeal punishment at all."

Dalton smiled grimly whilst the wretched hypocrite continued to plead in his own extenuation thus abjectly; that it had not convinced him, however, was evident by the tone with which he demanded, without giving him to conclude, what means he had taken to discover the boy's retreat.

"I am sure we have used every means in our power," said Jasper, in a whining tone; "I have spared no expense nor trouble on that head."

Dalton smiled incredulously. "That is to say, Mr. Jasper Vernon, you have expended a few paltry pounds."

"Mr. Vernon, I can assure you, has been most extremely liberal," said lawyer Sharp, in momentary forgetfulness of Dalton's threat.

"Well, Mr. Vernon," said Dalton, rising, "I believe I am an executor of Colonel Clarendon's as well as yourself, and as I am in England I shall consider it my duty to take this affair out of your hands. By employing a London detective officer of the highest intelligence, I trust in God I shall soon recover possession of this poor boy. If not, mark me, a day of heavy retribution is in store for you."

"This is really very extraordinary language, Mr. Dalton, for you to employ to me," said Jasper, turning very pale, notwithstanding his efforts to brazen it out. "Do you mean to imply that I have made away with the boy by any underhand means?"

"Time shall bring that to light, sir," retorted Dalton, gravely. "I know you, sir, of old, when you were not so wealthy, nor stood so high in the world's esteem as you do now."

"Really, Mr. Dalton—"

"But beware, sir," continued his visitor, towering over him with his majestic height, "a day of retribution will surely come even to you for many a past misdeed, of which this the last only swells the dismal catalogue. From my soul I tell you I believe you have acted falsely with poor Herbert; but, if it is so, look to yourself," and Dalton strode to the door.

"Such language, Mr. Dalton, is perfectly unpardonable," began Jasper, but he was interrupted in his harangue before he could get farther by Cecil, who rushed forward, and, confronting him, cried in a hoarse voice—

"And I, too, villain, shall seek Herbert at your hands. Your sneaking, tell-tale countenance declares your guilt too surely for you to establish your innocence," and, grasping Jasper's lean neck with his hands, he threw him upon lawyer Sharp, who was coming to his principal's rescue, and followed Dalton from the room, Norman having already done so.

I feel that it is no disparagement to Cecil's manliness to confess that immediately he was beyond the house the excitement that had carried him through so far broke down, and he could not restrain the tears that welled up to his eyes. Norman was the only witness to his emotion, for Dalton strode onwards toward the village where they had left the chaise, at a pace that a giant might have envied. The last plank that held him up on the stormy sea of despair that howled around him had gone down, and he was left to struggle with his evil destiny as he could.

When the young men reached the inn, they found fresh horses, by Dalton's orders, had been already put to the chaise; he was himself standing by the open door, whilst the landlord was filling a hamper with refreshments and wine for them to take with them. "Jump in, gentlemen," he cried, as they came up, and then, following them, he motioned mine host to shut the door, and cried out, in a loud voice, "To London!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE doctor and his two companions, the old servant man carrying Herbert as tenderly as if he had been an infant, were a full hour in arriving at the country residence of the former, although it was little more than a mile out of town. The easy rocking motion had such a soothing effect upon the poor little fellow, that he slept nearly all the way; and it was only on their stopping at last, that he awoke and opened his eyes to the scene around him, with a cry of delight that brought his new protector to his side in a moment.

It was indeed a lovely place, for it had been built hundreds

of years ago, and was now called the Grange, and stood amongst its gardens and woods more like a beautiful picture in a dream than a waking reality. On one side, a steep bank shelved down to the waters of a brook, that went murmuring on its way past silent woods and shady lawns, here opening out a view of a tiny waterfall, and there disclosing itself to the eye, cool, deep, and dark, beneath the shade of some noble elms; the air was heavy with the scent of a thousand delicious odours, and high over head came the thrilling song of a lark, that they had just startled from its nest at their feet.

And then there was the old Grange, grey, and quaint, and antique, with its old fashioned turrets and balconied windows, around which the starry jessamine and the graceful vine hung in a mass of verdure. A peacock, spreading his gorgeous feathers to the sun, stood like an eastern potentate glittering with jewels on the wall of the terrace; and half-a-dozen dogs, a splendid fellow of a blood-hound and two or three King Charles's spaniels, came bounding towards them the moment the doctor's old fashioned figure was descried within the limits of his lovely residence.

"I feel better already—very much better," whispered Herbert, as the doctor pressed his little worn hand while they advanced up the shrubbery. "How sweet everything seems, dear sir! oh, how very sweet!"

The doctor's eyes were raining down tears of delight as he listened, although he was chiding the dogs and affecting to examine his dahlias at the same moment.

"Down, Luath, down, sir!" he cried, threatening the blood-hound with his stick. "My dear little fellow, we will make a man of you in a week—Fie, Spot!" he added, driving away a beautiful spaniel, who almost devoured him with caresses. "You must make haste and grow well again very, very soon, and then, please God, we will make amends for all the misery you have suffered of late."

How beautiful he looked as he said these few simple words to the little pale listener, who lay in the old servant's arms as weak as an infant! His white hair and bright eyes, his complexion as clear and fresh as winter berries, his hale, neat figure encased in a suit of black, with silver buckles in his shoes, and a broad-brimmed hat, such as you still at times see some old vicar, in a quiet, sequestered place, wearing, really made the dear old doctor look quite handsome. He looked for all the world like a picture by Sir Joshua just stepped down from its frame. It was the costume of a century ago, but how fresh and well preserved it was!

They got into the house at last, and here new delights met

Herbert's eyes on every side. The hall was completely filled, in every part, with a miniature museum of stuffed birds and wild beasts, most of which the doctor had himself shot on the river Amazon and the Orinoco, for he had been a great traveller in his youth, and was full of the tales of wild adventure and privation he had gone through. But they did not stop long here, for they were afraid of exhausting the little stock of strength Herbert possessed, but passed at once into a room, opening out with its French windows upon the cool, verdant lawn without.

How very, very different it looked to the small, contracted, yet withal clean kitchen, which Jabez and Nell fondly imagined to be without its parallel in the world. The green walls hung with pictures, in their glittering, gold frames; flowers in vases on the tables; a couple of love-birds warbling in their gay cage near one window, a forest of geraniums and hepaticas in the other; a piano, with some open music lying on it; and over all, the delicious perfume of a thousand flowers—was certainly a striking contrast to the stifling closeness of Jabez's cubiculum.

"Papa! papa!" cried a little fairy, with cheeks glowing like rosebuds, and a shower of golden curls, bounding into the room; "Oh, papa, what a time you have been away! and Luti and I have been so fretting for you."

"Hush, hush, Sophy, and be still, will you?" rejoined the dear old doctor, kissing each rosy cheek in turn; "do you not see I have brought you a little playfellow?"

"Oh, that will be charming, papa!" cried the little thing, clapping her hands in her delight, whilst Luti, a little Italian greyhound, all fantastically decorated with blue silk, ribbons, and a collar of bells, gambolled and frolicked about her; "but how pale he is!"

"He has been ill, my love," said the kind physician.

"But you are better, now, are you not?" inquired Sophy, bringing her large blue eyes on a level with those of Herbert.

"I soon shall be," was the feeble rejoinder.

"Oh, what hollow eyes you have!" prattled the child, shrinking back for a moment; "and how sharp the bones stand out on your face! Do all ill people look like you?"

The *naïveté* of the question made the good doctor smile. "Do you remember, Sophy, having the measles?"

"Oh yes, papa; and how you used to carry me about the garden, and got me a pony to ride upon. Can you ride, little boy?"

The question brought the bright glow of health for a moment to Herbert's pale features.

"Yes, I see you can," prattled Sophy, without waiting for his reply. "Oh, that is delightful, for we can have such fine romps in our wood. Shall I bring Dorothy to see him, papa?"

"Not yet, my love; we must let him get a good sleep first, and then Dorothy shall see him. Now run away with Luti, and play till dinner time."

"Yes, yes, I will; but what do they call him?" she asked, pointing with one finger to the boy.

"Ask him yourself, my pet."

Sophy turned her beaming eyes upon the little invalid.

"Herbert Clarendon," was the whispered reply.

Good old Doctor Rivers started, and darted a keen, eager look at him.

"Herbert Clarendon!" he echoed, in astonishment.

"Oh, what a pretty name!" cried Sophy, clapping her hands. "Mine is Sophy Rivers, Herbert."

"Did you live at Delaval? was your papa a colonel? had you ever a brother?" were the questions the old man asked, one after another, as rapidly as he could give the words utterance, as he bent over the sick boy's couch in sickening suspense. "Oh speak, my dear child!"

"Papa lived at Delaval," cried the boy, bursting into tears, as the question brought all before him once more.

The doctor did not speak, but stood for several minutes absorbed in thought. "Go to sleep now, my love," he said, at length; and taking the little girl by the hand, left the room, and closed the door behind him.

Herbert was too thoroughly excited by all the strange events of the last hour or more, to obey his parting injunctions all at once. His rapid removal from Jabez's cottage was evidently owing to the scene with which old Joe had been mixed up during the preceding night; and the remembrance of this for a time threw him into a state of terror truly pitiable to behold. But now, however, he was once more safe, and amongst good people, in a beautiful house, with a kind protector in the good physician, and a playmate in little Sophy; and the pleasant images these thoughts called up, together with the perfume of the flowers, and the heavenly repose of all around, broke only at intervals by the low murmuring song of the love birds in the window, gradually steeped his jaded senses in oblivion, and he fell asleep.

It was evening when he awoke, for the long sun-shadows were streaming in through the windows in a lengthened line. The old doctor was sitting beside him with a placid yet anxious smile irradiating his venerable countenance; and, peeping over his shoulder, Herbert caught a glimpse of Sophy's rosy, eager face.

Mistress Dorothy, in a widow's cap and grey silk gown, stood in all the glory of her position in the household, at a little distance.

The doctor felt his pulse: it was calm and healthy. His skin was cool, and his eyes had lost their unnatural brilliancy, although they still looked out from their hollow depths upon him: and, in an eager whisper, he pronounced Herbert to be recovering. Sophy clapped her hands, and frisked about the room with Luti, whilst Mistress Dorothy came forward armed with a basin of jelly, which she made our little hero swallow as rapidly as possible. Then she went away, and presently returned with a sponge steeped in aromatic vinegar, with which she sponged Herbert's face and hands, and made them feel cool and pleasant. And, after all this, the doctor ordered the old man-servant to carry Herbert to his own room for the night.

It, too, looked out over the velvet lawn, beyond which you caught a glimpse of the woods Sophy had mentioned; and, although very small, looked so elegantly furnished with the gay French bed, and the tiny bookcase in a recess, that Herbert, feeble as he was, could not conceal his delight.

"My little room is next to yours, Herbert," cried Sophy, who had stolen in after the rest of the party; "and when you are quite well——"

"You must go away now, Sophy, or Herbert never will get better in this world," interposed the doctor, marching her to the door.

Herbert slept soundly that night, and, on awaking, declared that he really was strong enough to walk now; the doctor, however, would not hear of it, but insisted upon his occupying the same couch he had done the day before; and this being wheeled to an open window, Sophy brought her playthings to it, and began to prattle away to him as gaily as if they had known each other for a lifetime. The doctor had all this while been bustling in and out of the room, engaged with his usual morning avocations, and these being at last concluded, he came and sat down beside them.

"Do you remember anything of your early life, my boy?" he asked, anxiously, as Herbert took his hand, and pressed it to his lips.

"Not much, sir: I remember my dear papa, and Cecil."

"Cecil?—who is Cecil?"

"My brother; but he is quite a man, and almost as tall as papa was: and then I have a sister, Eleanor."

"And how, my dear child, do I come to find you in this strange plight?"

Herbert hid his face in his hands, and began to sob aloud.

"Has Herbert been naughty, papa?" demanded Sophy, looking wistfully up into the physician's face.

"Hush, my love! Herbert!"

The boy uncovered his face, and fixed his hollow eyes upon him, tremblingly.

"I wish to know all your little history, my dear boy, because as soon as you recover, it is my first duty to restore you to your friends," said the good doctor, gravely.

To his great surprise, the boy burst into a violent flood of tears, and exclaimed, "Oh! let me stay with you, dear sir; pray don't send me back to naughty Mr. Vernon."

"Who is Mr. Vernon, my love?"

"I do not know; but he took me away from Cecil and Eleanor, and I cannot love him."

"This is all very strange," thought the good doctor, both looking and feeling terribly perplexed. The boy could not be deceiving him, and yet on what other supposition could he solve the mystery that enveloped it.

"Jasper Vernon used to whip me," sobbed Herbert; and he would not let me keep my pony, as I used to do at Delaval; and I had no one to play with."

"Oh papa, how dull that would be," whispered Sophy, shrugging her little shoulders, "and to whip him too!"

"But how did you get into the plight I found you in?" inquired Doctor Rivers, on whose mind the truth began to dawn, faintly.

Herbert looked up bravely this time, and said, "I ran away."

"That was very, very wrong, my boy, and you have been severely punished for it; unhappy as you were with Mr. Vernon, I am sure you have been ten-fold more so since you left his house."

Herbert assented to this observation, with a groan, and lifted up his swimming eyes to the good old doctor, who could not resist their silent appeal.

"I am afraid, Herbert, your brother and sister are very unhappy at your disappearance, and they must be apprised as soon as possible that you are here. Do you know where either of them are?"

"I do not, sir; but I believe Eleanor left Delaval with Lady Susan."

"Lady Susan!"

"Yes; a nasty old woman, who I hate quite as much as naughty Jasper Vernon," cried Herbert, with something of his old spirit.

"Oh fie, Herbert," cried Sophy, shaking her head.

"But who is Lady Susan, my love?" inquired the doctor.

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"I do not know;" and Herbert, in reality, had never heard her ladyship's surname.

"Then I must immediately write to Mr. Vernon."

Herbert renewed his entreaties that Jasper Vernon should not be made acquainted with his actual retreat, and really looked so terrified at the bare thought of once more falling into his clutches, that the good doctor readily promised that the latter should not be divulged.

"I will myself set out this evening for Hertford, my dear child, and have an interview with Mr. Vernon, for the purpose of discovering where Mr. Cecil Clarendon and his sister at present are; Sophy and you can, in the meanwhile, amuse each other, and I shall expect on my return to find you quite strong, and with a little more bloom on your cheeks."

"But you will not let Mr. Vernon know where I am," again implored Herbert, clasping his little worn hands.

"I will not; for I am afraid, my dear little fellow, that he has behaved in the most cruel manner to you. I hope, however, I shall be able to bring your brother Cecil down with me, and with him I am sure you will feel yourself safe. Now you must rest yourself a little, and then try to pick the wing of a chicken, or something of that kind. Run out into the garden, Sophy, and give Luti an airing, whilst Herbert takes his nap."

The boy's eyes were fixed on the fairy form of the child, as she bounded away across the lawn, as gracefully agile as the beautiful animal by which she was accompanied, whilst sad and painful thoughts occupied his mind; he dreaded the thought of Jasper Vernon discovering his retreat, notwithstanding all the good doctor had promised to the contrary; and the languor of recent illness, that most depressing of all sensations, was still upon him, and weighed down his spirits so mournfully, that he found relief at last in a flood of tears.

Sophy came in to him along with Mrs. Dorothy, when the latter brought him his lunch; the child had culled the fairest and the sweetest flowers she could find, and now presented them, with a timid grace and a blush, that made Herbert think her even prettier than he had fancied her on the preceding night.

"Do you make haste and get better, will you," she whispered, pouting her dewy lips to be kissed, "and then we will ride Donald up and down the woods, and I will show you all the pretty places where the primroses grow."

In the evening Doctor Rivers came into his room, prepared for his journey,

"I come to assure you once more, my dear little fellow, that Jasper Vernon shall not discover your hiding-place from me;

and, unless I can discover Cecil's, I mean you to live with me. Do as Mistress Dorothy and Robert bid you until I come back, I trust along with your brother. God bless you!"

He pressed Herbert's hand in his own, looked gravely at his wasted face for a moment, and then quitted the room, without uttering another word. He paused to give some directions to his housekeeper, as he passed through the hall, and then got into his carriage; Herbert's pale face and hollow eyes, however, haunted him for miles after he had commenced his journey.

MY DREAM OF YESTERNIGHT.

BY C. E. NUGENT.

METHOUGHT 'twas a happy, bygone year,
And I was a child again;
The wood-lit fire blazed bright and clear,
For it was a new-year's e'en.
My mother gaz'd with a glistening eye,
And smil'd on our childish glee,
My father wing'd his prayer on high,
But prayed all silently.
He seem'd t'implore the Almighty Arm
To guard with fostering care,
To shield through life from every harm
His children gathered there.

At length, when the midnight hour peal'd forth,
Which told the old year was gone,
Our prattle ceased, and hush'd our mirth,
For ere our long day was done,
Our fond parents bid us bend the knee,
Pray for continuing grace,
When life is o'er, that heaven might be
Our blessed abiding place.
And then to our beds we hied, but ere
The past faded all from sight,
There softly dwelt on my youthful ear
My dear mother's last "Good night."

My dream was changed, and troubled now,—
 On a mountain top I stood,
 The lightning gleam'd o'er my pallid brow,
 And loud roar'd the foaming flood.
 A bark in the distance, far away,
 With her masts and sails all rent,
 No star to guide, ere the dawn of day
 Gilded the dark firmament.
 A blinding flash from the depths rose high,
 Reveal'd that all hope was gone,
 A long, last death-shriek of agony
 On the raging blast was borne.

Methought those forms of my early love
 Were all 'neath the deep laid low,
 My heart stood still, then I headlong strove
 To dash from the mountain brow.—
 But my dream was o'er, I woke to life ;
 Would that I could dream again,
 Forget, as at first, this world of strife,
 My manhood replete with pain ;
 For my parents, kindred, where are they?—
 They all to their rest are gone,
 And I must pursue my weary way,
 Cheerless, desolate, alone.

NATIONAL EVILS AND PRACTICAL REMEDIES. *

POLITICALLY speaking, there is but little stirring in England, in this year of grace, 1849. The excitement that swept away the corn-laws has subsided, and we have hardly recovered from the re-action then commenced. True, around us there have been the commotions, royalties routed in most unroyal manner, old constitutions shattered, crowns crumbled into dust ; Ireland has been on the verge of famine, and Canada on the verge of rebellion ; but, with the exception of the deposition of the railway

* *National Evils and Practical Remedies, with the Plan of a Model Town.* By James S. Buckingham. London : Peter Jackson.

king, nothing very remarkable has occurred at home. John Bull has sat under his own British oak, unmoved by what has taken place, almost even unintimidated by the war of the celebrated British lion, that was exhibited, not long since, at Drury Lane. Chartism hides its diminutive head. Mr. Berkeley and the ballot are very unceremoniously swamped; nor does the veteran reformer, Joseph Hume, meet with milder treatment. To such an extent was this re-action even carried on, that Lord John Russell has had the impudence to declare, that he did not believe there was any general disposition on the part of the people for further reform. In making this remark, we think his lordship showed himself completely ignorant of the public wish. There may be a profound national conviction, and yet that conviction may not be daily brawled into official ears—partly because the sense of the uselessness of such a course may for a time have rendered dominant the efforts of the friends of reform, and partly because there are times when wise men save their words for a fitting opportunity, as the deceitful lull of the tempest but betokens its renewed and increasing power. This English nation has acted in some such manner. It has been silent, but all the while it has been at work, it has been busy in investigating evils, and in decision of remedies; and it is now preparing itself for that eternal conflict which is the necessity and condition of human life. The spirit of reform, or, in other words, progress, is not dead, but sleepeth. None but the most superficial of observers could imagine that it did otherwise, and from that sleep it will start as a giant refreshed with wine, ready to do battle with all shams and lies, no matter how time-honoured, how backed by the pomps and pageantries of earth, how dear to all who feed and fatten on public wrong.

As one of the signs of the times, then,—as an indication that there is a good time coming, that men are marshalling themselves for fight,—we hail the appearance of Mr. Buckingham's instructive, interesting, and—notwithstanding a little egotism and diffuseness—very useful work. Mr. Buckingham treats his subjects under six heads, as follows:—first, The existing Evils of Society; second, Model Town and Associate Community; third, Financial Reform; fourth, Emigration and Colonization; fifth, Necessity of a new Reform Bill; and sixth, The Regeneration of Ireland.

The existing evils of society, to be probed to their core, to be denounced, would require at least as much time as our author has devoted to his whole subject. Still we perfectly agree with him in his remarks on this head. It is obvious, as he says, that the most careful student of the history of the past will be most deeply convinced that all the evils which have afflicted

the human race have been occasioned, not by any deficiency in the elements of happiness, for these have always existed, and still continue to exist in abundance; but by the ignorance of mankind as to their fittest modes of use and combination in the enmities produced by the conflicting claims of duty and interest continually opposed, instead of being in harmony with each other,—by the tyranny of the ruling classes, the sufferings of the enslaved, the selfishness of all who, strangely imbued with the erroneous belief that their happiness would be in proportion to their wealth, and their wealth in proportion to the poverty of others, have sought wealth as the only good, and, by plunders, murders, wars, and devastations in every form, accumulated that wealth in few hands, till others arose to plunder them in turn, and scatter that which they had so unjustly gathered. Of the evils of society, ignorance may be considered as the chief; the next great evil, or perhaps, in our country, the greatest, and the cause of all the others, is intemperance; another is national prejudice, this has kept up war—the vexatious barrier of custom-houses and coast-guards; another is the system of protection; another is war,—this might have been treated under the head of national prejudices; another evil is competition, or rivalry and opposition, instead of union and co-operation,—on this head opinions are divided, or rather, till lately, opinion has been hostile, but now the idea is finding favour with some of the ablest economists of the day. At any rate, the present state of things is an evil. Thus, in Ireland, there are millions of peasants who grow corn and fatten cattle for the owners of the fields and pastures they rent, and who enrich their landlords by the wealth thus created, and who never eat either of the corn they grow or the cattle they feed, because all is absorbed by the owners for whom they labour. In England, in the same manner, there are peasants reduced to maintain their families, including wife and seven children, on a shilling a-day! while the nobles, on whose estates they labour, have in some instances, from £300,000 to £400,000 per annum, or twenty thousand times as much per day as the individuals by whose labour this very wealth is created! In like manner, the merchants and manufacturers who realize fortunes of a million sterling, and can subscribe their £1,000 each towards a league for free trade, acquire that wealth by the labour of men, women, and children, to whom, as the reward for their earnings, they give them the barest maintenance in food, raiment, and decent shelter, for the present, without any provision for the future, and this is deemed amply sufficient. Without wasting much time, however, we may remark, that the existing arrangements of society are not the most favourable to the

happiness of her community ; that most men, in their separate trades and professions, have an interest adverse to that of the community at large ; that every where there is a wide line of demarcation between the theory held, and the practice of the life. And thus, notwithstanding that in Great Britain, Christianity has been preached for more than a thousand years, and that its truths are proclaimed every Sabbath by an army of a hundred thousand men, even these men live in strange contrast with the religion they preach. Thus, for instance, we find, from the report of the Ecclesiastical Commission, recently laid before both houses of Parliament, by command of her Majesty, that the successors of the apostles, the bishops of the English church, though they have incomes varying from £5,000 to £15,000 a-year, consider themselves too poor to provide their own residences, and, accordingly, have obtained from the funds set apart for the use of the clergy, sums varying from £10,000 to £100,000 for the purchase of palaces for their episcopal abodes, while they have had further grants of from £5,000 to £20,000 for repairs and additions, including eight-stalled stables for their carriage-horses, hot-houses, and conservatories for their exotic fruits and flowers, and dining halls for the sumptuous entertainment of their guests. Now, an associated community would place all classes in circumstances less likely to promote this discord, and would also give to each individual more sources of enjoyment than are at present afforded him by the competitive system. This is evident, as in the case Mr. Buckingham quotes : " In agriculture it is plain, that if an estate of 10,000 acres were parcelled out into minute sections of an acre each, among 10,000 persons, though the individuals living on those acres might be able to work out of them a scanty subsistence on vegetable food, as the Irish peasantry do on their plots of potatoe ground, yet no large operation of farming, on an economical scale, so as to produce grain of every kind, vegetables and fruits of every variety, and to feed cattle of every species, could be carried on to advantage or profit. In the first place, if every man would really cultivate his separate acre, 10,000 sets of ploughs and every other instrument necessary for this purpose would be required, with 10,000 pairs of horses or oxen to draw them, and even then the unaided labour of a single individual for each acre, to drain, fence, weed, plough, sow, reap, and gather into the barn, and at the same time feed and attend the cattle, with the labour and expense of building 10,000 sheds, or places of shelter, for their residence would eat up all profit, and leave the occupants as poor at the end of twenty years' labour, as when they began, while nothing beyond what they grew or produced

on their own farms could ever be enjoyed by them ; and they would thus be cut off from nearly all the luxuries of life. But if these 10,000 acres were to be treated as *one single farm* belonging to an association of 10,000 shareholders, every part of it might be laid out in that for which it was best adapted,—some in wheat, others in barley, oats, or rye ; some in potatoes, others in edible roots and vegetables ; some in fruit-gardens and orchards, others in meadows of grass for pasture, and some for mere ornaments in flowers. In this case, 1,000 persons would be quite sufficient to cultivate the whole 10,000 acres well ; while, by their united labour, every operation of draining, fencing, ploughing, reaping, gathering in, would be done in the best and most efficient manner. Only 1000 ploughs would be required for this, instead of 10,000, if each man cultivated his own acre ; and a corresponding reduction would take place in every kind of instrument required ; while, instead of 10,000 separate hovels, for these are what the Irish live in on their acres and half plots, 100 large substantial farm-houses, accommodating ten labourers and their families during the season for farming operations, would be abundantly sufficient. There would then be 9,000 persons whose labour would be available for trades and manufactures ; and, by a proper arrangement, training, and classification of these, with the requisite workshops, tools, and materials, and a systematic organization of their labour in admitting each to do that which he best understood, and liked most to be engaged in, a greater amount of wealth would be produced by 9,000 persons, each working on his own competition against rivals.” This organization has been attempted by wealthy capitalists, and with the most beneficial results. Thus, while a hand-loom weaver, working in his solitary chamber sixteen hours a-day, ekes out for himself a miserable pittance, and never knows the enjoyment of sufficient food, repose, or recreation ; a master manufacturer associates 10,000 men and women in a factory, and, by the organization of their labour, not only pays them on the average double the wages which the hand-loom weaver receives, but accumulates £100,000 to £500,000 of fortune out of the profits made by the labours of others. So also, while a miserable cottier on his acre of potato ground, in Ireland, even in the best years, earns but a scanty subsistence, and in bad years is only kept from perishing of hunger by alms or charity ; the Irish landlords, such as many of the nobility of England, who hold large estates there, derive from these large farms, worked by the united labours of numerous tenants and peasants, incomes of £50,000 and £100,000 a-year, without themselves ever touching the soil, or even going to look at it, except at intervals of some

years apart. Organization, then, is a formidable power for good ; it is adopted, then, by individuals, by governments with its armies, and natives, and other establishments. It were extremely desirable that there should be organizations for those who need it most. As Thomas Carlyle well says, "If we saw an army 90,000 strong, maintained and fully equipped, fighting—not against the French, who have a hard battle of their own of the like kind—but against human starvation, against chaos, stupidity, and our other real natural enemies, what a business were it!"

This organization then, so much required, has been devised by our author ; the same idea has entered other heads, but the details of Mr. Buckingham's plans are as follow :—

1. The company shall be entitled the **MODEL TOWN ASSOCIATION**, to be incorporated by royal charter or act of parliament, so as to limit the responsibility of each individual to the shares held by him in its stock.

2. Its object to be the building an entirely new town, to be called "**Victoria**," as recording the name of the virtuous and benevolent sovereign, in whose reign its foundation is hoped to be laid ; and at the same time as giving birth to the achievements of a great moral victory over many of the evils that now afflict society in its present disorganized state.

3. The town to contain every improvement in its position, plan, drainage, ventilation, architecture, supply of water, light, and every other elegance and convenience which the improved state of art and science will admit of being conferred on it within the means of the available capital, to be raised for that purpose. Its size to about a mile square, and the number of its inhabitants not to exceed ten thousand.

4. An extent of territory or farm in and around the town of about 10,000 acres, to be purchased or rented on the longest attainable lease, for the purpose of introducing every description of agriculture, pasture, and horticulture, for which its soil may be adapted to be worked, under the most improved methods at present known.

5. A suitable variety of manufactures and handicraft trades, to include chiefly those which are least injurious to health, and to give the predominance to the useful over the merely ornamental ; to be established near to the outer edge of the town, so as to place all the labouring population in the full enjoyment of the open air, and also to reserve the inner quarters of the town for private residences and public offices, free from the noises inseparable from large workshops or manufacturing operations.

6. The whole of the land, houses, factories, and materials, to

be the property of the company, and not of any individual, to be held as shares in insurance societies, gas and water companies, or any other associated property, are now held for the benefit of all, in such proportions as their shares may entitle them to, and placed under trustees or otherwise for the most perfect security, as the Royal Charter, or the Act of Incorporation, may direct. No person to be a member of the company, or an inhabitant of the town, except those who are *bond fide* shareholders in the property of the same to the extent of at least £20, and who are ready and willing to subscribe their assent to the fundamental rules to be incorporated in the constitution of its government, which should embrace the following, and such others as consideration might approve.

8. The introduction into the town, or any part of its estate, of any intoxicating liquids or substances, such as spirits, wine, beer, liquors, opium, or any other materials by which intoxication can be produced, to be strictly prohibited, on pain of seizure and destruction wherever found, and the expulsion of the parties found guilty of introducing them, with the forfeiture of all their rights,—the experience of a thousand years, and many millions of witnesses, having proved that these are among the most prolific sources of crime, disease, and misery, the bane of all existing communities in Britain, at least, and the benefit of none.

9. The like prohibition, and under the like penalties, of the entry or use of all weapons of war, including sabres, spears, bayonets, guns, pistols, and other fire-arms, as leading first to fatal accidents and next to vindictive uses; of gunpowder or other explosive compounds, as being equally unnecessary in a peaceable community; and of tobacco in every shape, as injurious to health, offensive to delicacy and good taste, and involving a waste of time and money which could be so much more usefully and agreeably employed.

10. Perfect freedom of all religious opinions, and equality of all religious rites of worship, without predominance or privilege to either, to be assured to all; each congregation to choose and support its own pastors, and regulate its own affairs.

11. The sanctity of the marriage vow to be admitted as equally binding in religion as in morals, and female purity to be protected by the arm of all; in conformity with which, persons of either sex, and not of one only, as in existing communities, to be held equally guilty if detected in illicit intercourse, whether in single or married life; so that seducers and seduced, betrayers and betrayed, shall be equally expelled the association, with loss of all their privileges, on proof of their guilt being legally established.

12. The Sabbath to be kept sacred to instruction, and innocent recreation included in the object of rest or repose, and no labour in any factories or workshops to be permitted on that day.

13. No women to be employed in laborious occupations, such as carrying heavy burdens, or working at any employment requiring great muscular strength, suited only for men, nor ever to be engaged in any out-door labours, except in ornamental gardening, and assisting, as required, to gather in the harvest.

14. No child to be employed in any kind of labour unsuited to its age and strength, or for any length of time unfavourable to its health, or prejudicial to its education.

15. No workman to be employed in actual labour more than eight hours per day, nor any woman more than seven hours; nor any woman between the ages of fifteen and twenty more than six, or between the ages of ten and fifteen more than five, nor any child under ten years of age more than four hours; to allow to each sufficient time for healthy recreation, entertainment, and instruction.

16. Individuals and families to pay to the company a rental, to be regulated by a moderate interest on the actual cost of the premises occupied by them, as the association will provide the buildings; but the furnishing of the apartments or houses thus occupied to be at the expense and according to the taste of each occupant.

17. Every dwelling, even the smallest, to be furnished with a water-closet, and a full supply of water, air, and light, as conducive not merely to health but morality.

18. Public baths in sufficient number and variety of cost to suit the different classes of society, to be placed at convenient distances in each quarter of the town.

19. Each single workman to occupy at least one entire and separate room for himself, to be used exclusively by him as his sleeping apartment. Each married couple, without children, to occupy two rooms; and each family in which there are children to occupy at least three rooms for domestic purposes.

20. To prevent the loss and waste, as well as the discomfort, arising from each individual or family cooking their own food or washing their own linen, large establishments to be provided for each of these, in which everything may be done much better, by the benefit of skill, and much cheaper, by the benefit of union, than could be accomplished at home. These to include several refectories or restaurants, at which persons may join the *table d'hôte* at given hours, for breakfast, dinner, or tea, at a comparatively trifling expense, and dine better than they could

alone: though, in case of sickness, or peculiar tastes, preferring such isolation, meals, at a somewhat increased rate of cost, may be supplied at their own homes, and families not caring for the increased expense might, if they preferred, live entirely within themselves.

21. To save the time and care of the mothers, as well for the benefit of the health, temper, and morals of the children, suitable establishments of the most perfect kind to be provided, in which the children of all who desire to avail themselves of this advantage may be taken the greatest care of by persons trained as nurses, and so classified in different apartments as that those only of similar or appropriate ages may be associated together, with due separations of certain opposite tempers, the correction of bad infant habits, and the separation of the sexes after a given period. The superintendence of the education and training of all such children to be confided to the most competent hands, thus saving the parents all anxiety about their being well cared for, with perfect liberty on the part of the mothers to visit them at all times, or to have them at home when desired, as at present with children sent to schools; but sparing the children the unavoidable contamination which arises from their being brought up, as they now often are, with several of both sexes sleeping in the same room by night, and, from their parents being occupied away from home, often left to wander in the streets, with no one to care for or direct them, there to be educated in all manner of vice, in the worst possible school in the world, as is seen in every town of the kingdom at the present day, breeding most of the thieves and prostitutes by whom the streets of our best cities and smallest villages are now unhappily defiled.

But we must give a summary of the Buckingham Plan. Rule 22 provides for the execution of justice by competent arbitrators. 23, for medical advice, which is to be administered gratis by the most competent physicians and surgeons; 24 relates to education, which, in the same manner, is to be given free of cost to all, from the earliest age up to fifteen, during which every child, male and female, is to be taught at the least reading, writing, arithmetic, the outlines of geography, botany, geology, mineralogy, natural history, and chemistry, with the addition of French, drawing, and music. This town is to be built on a regular plan, with dwellings of every gradation of size and scale, so as to have apartments, suites of rooms, and entire dwellings, from a rental of £10 per annum to a rental of £300, and in proportions of each as may provide for a population of about 10,000 inhabitants, men, women, and children. This town is to embrace all the advantages that the latest improvements in en-

gineering, architecture, and sanitary science can confer. The churches, schools, public offices, halls, libraries, baths, dining-rooms, are to be placed equidistant from all parts of the town. Every species of fire is to be made to consume its own smoke, or, if that be impossible, coke is to be used. All establishments likely to create nuisances, such as slaughterhouses, etc., to be placed at sufficiently remote distances from the residents and workshops to ensure their occupants from any interference with their health or comfort. The large manufactories are to be placed beyond the limits of the town, so as to ensure fresh air and exercise to the parties employed in them. Beyond the town, also, are to be parks, with fountains and flowers, a botanical garden, and living collection of natural history in all its branches, a gymnasium, for athletic exercises and manly games, and a public cemetery, beautiful as the place should be where the flesh awaits the final resurrection of the just. Provision is to be made for the gradual increase of population by the gradual promotion of the most worthy and most efficient members of each rank or class to a reserved corps, by which other associations might be formed. To build and furnish this model town, would cost £4,000,000. This is to be raised in 200,000 shares, of £20 each. The produce is to be sold to the resident members at ten per cent. below London prices. The accounts of the company would be investigated once a year, when the profits would be divided. This in a temperate community would be very large, as even in Great Britain, with all our intemperance, bad debts, fraudulent bankruptcies, it has been estimated that the annual produce of capital skill and labour has been £400,000,000 sterling, and abundant instances might be cited to show that landed proprietors and manufacturers realize an annual profit of from £30 to £50 per head on the labour of the persons employed on their estates or in their factories; some Manchester men, beginning with a capital of less than £100, having ended with a fortune of 1,000,000 sterling, and as most of the residents in the model town will be producers of wealth, we may conclude that the profits will be very great. The population is to be divided into ten classes, as follows: ordinary labourers, skilled labourers, ordinary artisans, skilled artisans, superintendents, responsible managers, educational directors, medical and legal officers, professors, physicians, judges, members of council; these are again to be divided into three classes, and to be paid accordingly. The governor, who, in a perfect community as this is to be, will have nothing whatever to do, will, as is generally the case now, be the best paid of all, and will rejoice in an income of £100 a-month; but these differences of rank

are not insuperable. The lowest may work his way upwards. As it will be, says Mr. Buckingham, one of the fundamental conditions of the constitution that promotion from the lowest rank to the highest, shall be open to all without limit or restriction, and be determined only by merit and capacity, without favour, influence, or purchase ; those who begin as ordinary labourers, may rise, by their own exertions, to skilled labourers, and pass thence into all the higher gradations. Wherever their capacity and conduct—to be judged of by their colleagues in their own rank and class—shall entitle them to fill the vacancy next above them ; and if they reach the highest rank, for which there will be greater facilities here than in any society known, they may, whenever they can obtain the suffrages of their fellow-citizens, (which, however distinguishable and unquestionable, merit can alone secure) pass into the council chamber, and be chosen by their colleagues as governor of the city.

Such is the model town our author proposes to establish. The idea is one that has long been favourably received, and we believe that such an organization of society would offer far more aid to virtue, and would remove more of the encouragements to vice, than the organization which at present prevails. In some of the details we may and we should differ from our author, but his idea is one that is every day more forcibly seizing the public mind ; it has long been held by our philosophers, and political economy now acknowledges its existence, and needs its support. In America, in the communities where it has been tried, it has answered well ; and in England, with picked men, it would undoubtedly answer equally well. We are aware, the experiments made in England up to the present time, have been failures ; but it would have been wonderful had they not been so. We are not great believers in the increasing depravity of the age, but we believe the result of our present mode of transacting business, and of our present state of civilization is to increase luxury and want, the riches of the rich, the poverty of the poor. An associated community would create an amount of happiness such as can be attained by no other organization ; though Mr. Buckingham's organization is not the one the most to our heart. We are not enemies to wine, that makes glad the heart of man ; the cigar is not an abomination in our nostrils, and a community altogether ignorant of such creature comforts, would be far too perfect for sinners like ourselves ; but still Mr. Buckingham holds out an idea such as we should be glad to see realized—a town of happy, moral, intelligent, industrious men,—where want is a stranger, where disease is unknown—where none are

overworked, and where all are well filled. Is not this the Elysium for which we all have sighed,—which would satisfy the most restless and discontented of men and of women?

There are other matters treated of in Mr. Buckingham's volume, which is well worthy of perusal; these are the principles of taxation, emigration, and colonization, the necessity of a new reform bill, and the regeneration of Ireland. All subjects now of vital importance—subjects that must be considered seriously by every reflecting mind. The time is coming, when a revolution will be begun in England—a revolution, not, it may be, of physical, but of moral force,—a revolution in ideas, a revolution that will be fought by logic and truth, and the result of which will be true happiness. Such volumes as those of Mr. Buckingham's are useful, as in some degree they supply combatants with arms, and indicate the way. J. E. R.

THE MAGIC CIRCLET.

'Twas a wild dream; and far away I saw a verdant isle,
Which slept beneath the setting sun, and wooed its parting
smile:
And on this isle a circlet beamed, enwreathed with summer
flowers—
Bright rainbow hues were glittering, and golden thoughts and
hours.

Time passeth by, and once again I seek the islet fair—
The magic emblem resteth yet upon the greensward there;
But ah! how changed its ample bounds—that flowery circlet
now
Within its evanescent ring few golden visions show.

For dim and wintry clouds float o'er, and summer flowers
decay,
And rainbow tints, and golden thoughts, with sunshine pass
away;
But still within the bounds I kneel, and raise a prayer to
Heaven—
Thus sheltered may I glide to rest, some holy sabbath even!

For one by one my early friends—my golden days—have flown,
 And now within life's circlet ring I kneel, yet not alone,
 For precious are the lingering rays, and priceless to my heart ;
 And ere night shadows darkly close, may I from life depart !

C. A. M. W.

THE SEASONS.

A FANTASY.

Spring days approach—Spring's violet flowers—
 Balmy western winds—soft refreshing showers.
 Flute music sighing—love-birds singing—
 Joy and gladness bringing—

Sweet Spring hours !

Summer days are coming,
 Summer roses blooming,
 Crystal streamlets flowing.
 Angels, 'mid the silent night,
 Hover in the cold moonlight,
 Where the lotus gleameth white—
 Oh, blessed Summer night !

Autumn days approach,
 Sad—last Autumn days.
 So beautiful and mild, so dear to sorrow's child ;—
 The time of wild woods' golden glory,
 When hearts are full of by-gone story ;
 When flowers look wan on lowly graves,
 Where the gloomy yew-tree waves,
 As Autumn lingereth—lingereth long—

Sad—last Autumn days !

Wintry hours most stern and drear !
Without—the chilling snow-storm's blight,
Within—the lone heart's stormy night :
 No sunshine, flowers, or earthly light !
 But as the stars shine forth more bright,
 In the clear frosty Winter night,
 E'en so, my God, be Thou to me
 More clear amid life's misery,

And dreary Winter hours !

C. A. M. W.

SWISSIANA.

CHAPTER XVII.*

FIRST DAY IN THE OBERLAND BERNOIS.

"The fame of those pure bards, whose faces lie
 Like glorious clouds, in summer's calmest even,
 Fringing the western skirts of darkening heaven;
 And sprinkled o'er with hues of rainbow dye,
 Awakes no voice of thunder, which may vie
 With mighty chiefs' renown. From ages gone,
 In low, undying strain, it lengthens on,
 Earth's greenest solitudes with joy to fill:
 Felt breathing in the silence of the sky,
 Or trembling in the gush of new-born rill,
 Or whispering o'er the lake's undimpled breast;
 Yet blest to live where trumpet notes are still,
 To wake a pulse of earth-born extasy
 In the deep bosom of eternal rest."

T. N. TALFOURD.

THE Oberland Bernois is the most interesting portion of Switzerland. There has been much dispute among the inhabitants as to the extent of country which it properly comprises; the men of Hasle stoutly asserting that the appellation originally belonged to their valley alone, while others declare that it includes those of Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen, Frutigen, and the Sarine. Some, again, say that the town and lake of Thien forms no part of the much contested country; but the discussion is of so slight consequence to foreigners, who cannot be expected to take the same interest in local questions as the sons of the soil themselves, that we shall pursue it no farther—merely mentioning that the name of *Oberland* signifies literally Highland, from the mountainous nature of that tract of country, which was thus first called by the French in 1798, when they formed it into a canton.

The Oberland is not interesting from its natural beauties alone, but also from the very important part it has played in

* Continued from page 63, vol. lvi.

the history of Switzerland. The forest cantons excepted, which are chiefly known by the fabled exploits of Tell, the Oberland stands first in the pages of romance. It was the cradle of the bards; from out of its valleys proceeded those minstrel troops, harp in hand, who were so generally famous over the whole of Germany under the name of Minnesänger. They were similar to the Trouvères and Troubadours of the Provençal dialects of *oc* and *oil*, but were no branch of that fraternity, the languages of the two being entirely different. Even the subject-matter of the one was seldom transfused into the lays of the other; a circumstance which shows to what height *nationality* and *origin* were carried in those days, when even the chance of obtaining the burden of a new song without trouble, was set aside rather than in its search have to associate with *barbarians*, as each party styled the other: for it must be remembered that so great was the age for legends, tales, lays, serenades, and ditties of every kind, at the time we treat of, that the poor minstrels were as much put about as modern romancists are, to find novelty for the hungry and expectant public that required it of them.

The Minnesänger flourished about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and exercised their vocation chiefly on the Rhine, between Ehrenbreitstein and Strasburg, and the part of Switzerland now called the Oberland Bernois. They were a highly respected race, and, generally speaking, deservedly so. In those dark days when learning was rare, the monks and troubadours were the only people who commonly possessed it, and they were usually consulted in cases where the sword hung useless—with this difference, that where *duty* was concerned, the monks were the class sought—where *love*, it was the minstrels. The former have the merit of having rescued from oblivion what little we know of the history of those ages, but they were mere chroniclers; and if the history of that period possess any charm to the living student, the credit is wholly due to the minstrels, who, however exaggerated their stories, have given to history life and colouring. Their tales were impressed in the minds of their auditors, who retailed them to their children, and so they have been transmitted from generation to generation, till they are collected and appropriated by the historian to the respective epoch which they illustrate. "Shew me the songs of a nation, and I will tell you its character," was the saying of a great writer; following which we may add, that if in history the priest has preserved the *body*, the minstrel has preserved the *soul*.

The Minnesängers were welcomed by all classes: in the hall they sung of the glory of the baron's ancestors; in the cottage they swept their harps to chivalrous themes, and by directing

the tastes of their humbler hearers to noble deeds, they preserved a spirit of honour among the peasantry of a nation.* Even princes vied with them in their art, and considered the poetic wreath a fit accompaniment to warlike prowess; and we could name many *preux chevaliers* who acquired considerable fame in the gentler accomplishment. Uhland, in modern days, has revived the style of the Minnesängers with much success. Several other German poets have also entered the same field, among whom Schiller, Goethe, Schwab, and the two Schlegels stand conspicuous; but none of them have imbued the ballad with its ancient spirit like Uhland. We will now give one of his most popular ballads, the *morale* of which illustrates beautifully the regard and veneration wherein the Minnesängers were held in those times, and shows how sacred their persons were considered to be. In the translation I have aimed rather at fidelity than elegance. Uhland has called it

“The Minstrel’s Curse.”

“In days of yore a castle stood, full lofty and full grand,
Glist’ning o’er the country from the blue sea to the strand;
Around a blooming wreath in the fragrant gardens grew,
And from it sprung fresh fountains, like rainbows in their hue.

“A haughty king dwelt yonder, of lands and conquests full,
And he sat upon his throne so sullen and so dull;
For what he thinks is fearful, and what he speaks is war,
And what he seems is fury, and what he writes is gore.

“Once drew nigh to this castle an honoured minstrel pair,
The one had golden ringlets, the other had grey hair;
The old man with his harp mounted on a saddled jade,
Rode briskly to the side of his blooming young comrade.

“The old thus spake to the young:—‘Now be prepared, my son!
Contrive our deepest lay, give out the sonorous tone;
Assemble all thy powers, to delight as well as ache!
Let it be our task this day the king’s hard heart to wake.”

“In the lofty pillared hall both minstrels now are gone,
Where the king and his consort are seated on the throne:
The king, fierce and gorgeous as the ruddy northern star,
The queen, sweet and gentle as the full moon beaming far.

“Then the old man swept the strings—with skill he swept them round,
That richer to the ears, ever richer grew the sound;
And the youth poured forth his voice, clear as celestial fire,
In the old song, like an ethereal spirit’s quire.

* I speak here more particularly of Switzerland, the peasantry of the original portion of which have, since the days of Cæsar, been a free people.

- “ They sing of spring and love, of a happier golden day,
Of freedom, honoured men, and of truth and sanctity :
They sing of the many sweets that from man’s bosom part,
They sing of the many thoughts that elevate his heart.
- “ The courtier band assembled forget all scoffing now—
The bold warriors of the king before their God do bow ;
And the queen, dissolved in tears of pleasure and of woe,
Tears from her breast the rose, for the minstrel pair below.
- “ ‘ Thou hast my folk seduced—wilt thou now mislead my wife ?’
The king he chafes and strides along, all quivering with grief ;
He hurls his gleaming sword deep the young man’s bosom in,
When from the gold hair’d singer a bloody stream doth spring.
- “ And when the crowd of list’ners hath vanished in alarm,
The young man he expires on the elder minstrel’s arm,
Who wraps the mantle round him, and sets him on his horse,
And, binding him upright, from the castle shapes his course.
- “ But the aged minstrel halts the entrance gate before,
And takes his harp, which than all harps he esteems far more,
Near a marble column he hath dashed it to the ground,
With a cry which echoes through the castle and around :—
- “ ‘ Woe to you, ye haughty halls ! ne’er sound with melody,
Your porches ne’er echo with strings nor minstrelsy ;
No ! only sighs and groanings, and timid thralldom’s pace,
Till the spirit of revenge by age doth ye efface !
- “ ‘ Woe to you, ye fragrant gardens in the sweet May light !
To these I show this death in its full disfigured sight ;
May you thereby wither up, may every fountain dry,
May you ere long turn to stone, and like a desert lie !
- “ ‘ Woe to thee, wicked murderer ! thou curse of minstrels all !
After fame’s bloody garland in vain is every wall :
May thy name be forgotten, steeped in eternal night—
May it expire in vacant air—vanish out of sight.’ ”
- “ ‘Twas thus the old man spake, and heaven has heard his cry :
The walls are with the ground, and the halls in ruin lie ;
Yet one high pillar there tells the pomp of ages past,
But it, already split, into dust shall turn at last.
- “ Instead of fragrant gardens, a solitary dell—
No tree scatters shade around, no stream along doth well :
No record of the king in heroic lay or verse ;
But, sunken and forgotten !—Such is the ‘ Minstrel’s Curse.’ ”

The leading poem of the Minnesänger is the famous epic known by the name of Nibelungen. It treats of the exploits of

the great warriors of that period, chiefly the dynasty of the Swabian emperors, and is the work of various hands. Its merits, therefore, are unequal—some passages are of surpassing power and grandeur—others are weak in the extreme. It has been edited in Germany of late years, and a modern version, as close to the original as possible, has also been published in the same country. Simrock, the translator, has likewise added an introduction to his modernised Nibelungen Lied, under the title of “Der Nibelungenhort,” which is written in the same style and metre as the great poem itself. The Nibelungen may be styled the Iliad, or the Maha-barata, of Germany.

Chief of all the Swiss Minnesänger, was Heinrich von Strättlingen. He was descended from royalty; Rodolph von Strättlingen, the first king of Burgundy about the year 900, having been his ancestor. Count Heinrich, our hero, had possessions in the neighbourhood of Thun, at a spot called Hoffstetten, near which to this day may be seen a tablet, bearing the following inscription:—“Under the shade of these trees it was that the noble knight and troubadour, Heinrich von Strättlingen, sang his strains of pleasure and of love.” The trees which he seems, like Wordsworth, to have loved so much, are two decayed stumps of oaks, between which lies the tablet to his memory. This resting-place is called the “Bardenwäldchen,” i. e. “Bard’s Grove;” and on a mossy lawn of unfading green, a few yards from the shattered oak-trees, is the monument of the minstrel knight. It represents him in a suit of armour, with his hands crossed upon his breast, and his feet resting upon a couched lion. His scutcheon, and the arms of the house of Strättlingen lie beside him. Heinrich was the poet of love; all his romances breathe the tender passion—forlorn maidens—sighing knights—tourney queens—and love-sick damsels. The public library at Thun contains, we understand, some MSS. of his works.

The history of the House of Strättlingen is full of romance. Its chiefs were so brave and good, that the country in the neighbourhood of their domains was called “The region of Golden Pleasure.” The archangel, St. Michael, is said to have assisted Teodoric to obtain a victory in single combat while asleep, and always continued the tutelary saint of the family. The Castle of Strättlingen was, in the days of chivalry, so celebrated for its tournaments, as to be called by the Minnesängers, the “Golden Court.” A later descendant of the house, Sigismund by name, in the year 1699 had his tomb prepared, as if he were about to die. His friends, wishing probably to pay him a compliment, remarked that he wore well, that age sat light and easy upon his brow, and that consequently the 6 should be changed into a 7—making the date of his decease thus

stand, 1799—one century more. He turned to them in reply: “No!” cried he, “when I ordered my tomb to be cut, and the date to be chiselled, I felt that the hand of death was upon me: let the figures then remain, for in 1699 Sigismund von Strättlingen will be a corpse. The event verified his presentiment.

Rüdiger of Zurich, who died in 1304, was a great patron of the Minnesänger. He made a collection of their best songs, chosen from the lays of more than one hundred and forty minstrels; * but chiefly from those of Veldeck, a leading poet, who flourished about the end of the twelfth century, and who composed an “Eneidt.” The other leading Minnesänger of Switzerland were:—Walter von der Vogelweide, who lived in the thirteenth century, and was of noble descent; Werner de Tüffen, a count of Appenzell; Conrad de Mure, who died in 1280, and who was the author of the song in celebration of Rodolphe’s great victory; Boner, the author of “Edelstein,” which Oberlin republished in the year 1782; Lütold de Regensberg, who was initiated into the mysteries of wisdom by a familiar spirit, during the silence of night, and in the solitary tower of his castle of Balb, situated in the valley of Kissnach (so at least goes the story);—Wolfran d’ Eschenbach, who celebrated in verse the valour of Parcival, and who wrote the “Titurel;”—and, lastly, Rodolph, vassal of Montfort, who composed the beautiful poem of “Wilhelm von Brabant.” He bore the name of “The Writer.”—(Schreiber).

These Minnesänger must not be confounded with the Meistersänger, though it is often the custom among writers to class them together. The last named consisted of a fraternity of journeymen—tailors, weavers, and artizans—who inhabited the towns of upper Germany, and who measured out their rhymes as they did cloth, with line and yard stick. The society first came into existence on the downfall of the Swabian nobles and, with them, the troops of Minnesänger. The songs of the Meistersänger were vulgar *ad nauseam*; they smelt rather of the *shop* than of the *lamp*, and treated rather of good Sunday and holiday dinners, or of sonnets to the charms of some burgo-meister’s buxom daughter, than of knights with squires, like Chaucer’s, “as modest as a maid,” or of damsels like unto gentle Edmund’s “heavenly Una with her milk-white lamb.”

I have introduced the Minnesänger thus at length, that the reader may understand the frequent legends, and allusions to romance, which will be found in the course of this and the following chapter. Most of those tales of castle and of bower had origin in the Minnesänger, whose lays have descended to

* This collection has been published of late years, by Bodmer, the Swiss poet.

posterity. They have been perpetuated from father to son by many fond memories—the surrounding lakes and rocks speak a language to the peasantry which endears their history to them—and the traveller cannot see a stately ruin among these wilds without picturing to himself its castle yard echoing to the clang of spear and helmet, or its halls resounding with the strains of minstrel, harp, and viol.

It was with some disappointment that my travelling companion informed me, on the following morning, that he would be unable to visit Thun. It was a disappointment to both of us, for Thun is one of the most ancient towns in Switzerland. But my friend was limited to time. He had arranged to meet a brother at Interlachen that same evening, and if he would keep his appointment, no time should be lost. I therefore decided to forego visiting Thun, to the pleasure of his company along the lake.

Up betimes, as has been my wont throughout the whole of this tour, I found my friend at the gateway of the inn, already “harnessed.” We struck off at a sharp pace, to cover as much ground as possible before the sun came out in full power, and traversing the quiet streets of Frutigen, soon arrived at the river Kander, which we crossed over a beautiful covered bridge, the finest specimen I have seen of this kind of architecture in Switzerland. A league further we came to a spot where three roads meet; one leads to Thun; one to the village we had left; one, little better than a bridle-path, to Leissigen: we chose the latter.

We found the distance to Leissigen a good four hours’ walk. The village is situated in a blooming country, on the southern shore of the Lake of Thun. Our first care on reaching the inn was to order breakfast; and, while it was being prepared, we took advantage of the close proximity of the water, and refreshed ourselves with a luxurious bathe. After breakfast we “sat awhile,” and contracted with a boatman to row us to the mouth of the river Aar, about six miles distant, which feeds the lake at its south-east end. The sail was very delightful, and I was very much pleased with the Lake of Thun—indeed, I may say, agreeably surprised. I had never heard this sheet of water so much praised as others in Switzerland, which is curious, for its beauties certainly equal those of any, except of the Lake of Lucerne. The mountains that skirt the Lake of Thun on its north are high and abrupt, and overhang its shore, threatening to fall into the depths below. The lake is 1756 feet above the level of the sea; is five miles long, and three miles broad in its widest part. Its depth in some parts cannot be fathomed. Its waters are of a deep blue colour.

The first village we sailed past was Darlingen, which has a sort of dock for large boats. A road leads hence to Interlachen, called the "Devil's road," from a tradition that the Prince of Darkness was wont to drive his carriage along it to pick up the monks of a neighbouring convent, and transport them to the summit of the Suleck, where they all were feasted at his Satanic Majesty's expense. On the opposite shore of the lake we passed the ancient village of Oberhofen. Fable reports that its castle, the ruins of which may yet be seen, was erected so early as the year 428! In the twelfth century it belonged to Walter von Eschenbach, one of the murderers of Albert I, emperor of Austria. A little beyond Oberhofen, on the same side of the lake, lies a mass of ruins, which are ascribed to a town named Roll, said formerly to have stood here. If we may believe the minstrels, the fall of Roll is to be ascribed to the gnomes—the Robolds of Theodor Körner. One of these sprites having been denied shelter in the town, was hospitably received into the cottage of a poor peasant. On the morrow the heights above Roll were covered with a legion of gnomes, who thundered down immense piles of rock upon the inhabitants, and destroyed every soul and habitation, except the peasant and his hut.

We now passed a small port, wherein lay a number of vessels employed in the commerce of the lake. The village is that of Merlingen. The vines here have been peculiarly unfortunate in their growth; some such puzzle for naturalists as the potato rot is in our own country, annually preventing the full and healthy development of the shrub. Traditions accuse the gipsies of having tampered with the soil, while the monks of old used to lay the blame at the doors of hell. The persecutions ascribed to the devil have raised many a laugh at the expense of the poor inhabitants of Merlingen; in fact, the villagers are a simple and credulous set, and are ever dreaming of some legend or superstition. However, with all their faults, they are allowed to make the best cheeses in the whole Oberland!

Behind Merlingen lies a mountain containing a grotto, called the Beatenhöhle (cave of St. Beatus), which has served as subject both for history and romance. The grotto is said to have been once inhabited by a dragon, which, like that of Rhodes, kept the whole country in terror. The "draconis extirpator," however, was in this case no knight, neither a St. George, nor his original, Diew-Donné de Gozon, but a simple monk of old England. Having conquered the scaly brute, he took up his abode in the grotto, and set himself to the pious task of converting the Swiss to Christianity. He possessed a magic mantle; he had but to cast it across his shoulders, wish

a destination, and in a trice he was borne aloft through the air to the spot he had desired. He died in 112, at the age of ninety; and his tomb became for many years afterwards a resort for pilgrims.

We were now at the end of the lake, where the river Aar discharges its waters into the blue and placid bason, whose surface we had that moment traversed. We landed on the south shore of the river, and plunged at once into a pass smiling with verdure. After half an hour's march, we struck to the right into a narrow defile, from whence we emerged into a meadow where the Jungfrau became visible to us for the *first*, and the Blumlisalp for the *last* time.

Here we also saw the ruins of the castle of Unspunnen, to which Madame de Staël alludes in her great work "*De l'Allemagne*." This castle is said to have been of very ancient date. A legend states, that the Baron Burkard, who possessed it at the commencement of the thirteenth century, had a daughter named Ida, who allied herself in marriage with the heir of the rival house of Wadenschwyl. Both Ida, and her husband Rodolph, were ordered to quit the old baron's castle at once, for the match was much against his will. The young couple retired to Berne, where a son was born to them, whom they christened Walter. At length, Rodolph came to the resolution of seeing his father-in-law again before the latter, who was an aged man, died. He therefore took with him his little boy Walter, and travelling on foot demanded rest and shelter at the gates of the castle of Unspunnen. Hospitality was freely accorded him; and entering the old baronial hall, where sat the aged Count at the head of his solitary trencher board, he presented to him the youthful Walter. The baron had long repented him of his harsh conduct towards his daughter, and he yearned to embrace her before he died, but his pride had hitherto prevented him. The opportunity now given was not to be lost. He descended from his raised chair, lifted the boy Walter in his feeble arms, and pointed him out to his surrounding vassals as the future Baron of Unspunnen. In token of the reconciliation, public games were appointed to take place every year. They continued in custom during a long period, but latterly have fallen into desuetude.

A turn to the right brought us to the celebrated valley of Lauterbrunnen, undoubtedly one of the finest in Switzerland; no where else is there seen that strength of vegetation developing itself as here, at the foot of the mountains, and which gives so much delight to the eye. We followed the course of the river Lutchin, till we arrived at a large rock or stone, bearing an inscription, which may be translated in these words: "Here

the Baron von Rothenfluh was slain by his brother. Obligated to flee, the murderer ended his life in exile and despair, and was the last of his race, once so rich and so powerful." The rock is called the "Brother's Rock," from the nature of the deed it witnessed. About a mile beyond are the ruins of the castle. I have endeavoured to weave this tradition into a ballad, after the style of the Minnesänger. From a desire to imitate the simplicity of their descriptions, I may have become tedious, but the indulgent reader will know how to pardon this fault, in consideration of the attempt.

I.

Far wentte yer fame in manie a landde,
Ye lords of Rottenfluh;
Yer valour and yer deeds of handde,
Yer herte so proud and true.

II.

Yer glorie it was like ye sonne,
It shone with gladdeninge ray;
Yer kinsmonne Attila ye Hun,
As famed in minstrel lay.

III.

Yer castle toured on a rock,
Beside ye Lutchin streme;
Its craggie walles ye foe wolde mock,
So loftie did ye seme.

IV.

[Botte other foes possessed its towers,
And undermynd its strengthe;
Felle jealousye with all her powers,
Gotte root within at lengthe.]

V.

Ye old lorde dedde, ye castle came
Unto his sonnes by right:
Ye first for bookes hadde gaynd a name,
Ye laste for powerfulle might.

VI.

"Lette me have rule," ye younger cries,
His brother answers notte;
"Ye cloystered celle for one so wyse,
Methinks a fitter spotte.

VII.

"Thes castle ne'er was built for peace,
Nor bookishhe monkes to dwell ;
By soch likke wayes its fame will cease,
Its ruine who can telle ?

VIII.

Ye elder, gentle as a maid,
Was grieved within his breast ;
Botte smothering wrathe no word he saydde,
'Gainst him he loved ye best.

IX.

Botte hyed him quicklie to ye shryne,
Which stode ye castle nearre ;
And 'fore its image did inclyne,
And weptte with mony a teare.

X.

He prayed to heaven to change the hate
His brother bore to hym ;
If danger called on dethe he'd waite,
With castle, lyfe, and lymbe.

XII.

Tho' now 'monge bookes and antient lore,
He loved to spendde his dayes,
He once hadde herde ye battle's roare,
Hadde mette ye Paynim's gaze.

XIII.

"That I have faults folle well I trow,
I may have used hym ille ;
Botte 'tween us two, ye Judge, be thou,
And manyfeste thy wille."

XIV.

He sayd : and rysyng, swiflie spedde,
With lightsome steppe spedde he ;
Along ye path which homeward ledde,
Rite blythe and merrylie.

XV.

Ye castle turrets came in view,
When he hys brother mette ;
To grete that brother quick he flew,
To tell he loved him yet.

XI.

Ye yonger raysed his sword on high,
 And cast it like a dartte;
 Ye messenger of dethe did fly,
 And pierced his brother's herte.

XVI.

A new-made grayve stode close besyde,
 Hidde by a rock from syghte;
 Ye spotte was mete for fratrikyde,
 And crymes of blackest nyghte.

XVII.

A hurried glance ye slaier gave,
 To see that none were neare;
 Then cast his brother in ye grave,
 Without a syghe or teare.

XVIII.

Botte e'en as oft as earthe he pyled,
 Ye grayve threw up ye dedde;
 Ye murderer paused with terrour wilde,
 With agonie and drede.

XIX.

In vain he tried that smyle to hyde,
 That smyle his brother wore;
 He tossed ye corse from syde to syde,
 Till hys handdes were smered with gore.

XX.

Agene he digged—agene—agene,
 Botte all to nae avayle;
 His mattock echoed—"Cain!—Cain!—Cain!"
 O'er castle, alpe, and dayle.

XXI.

Ye spayde dropped idlie from hys handde,
 Hys knyve with tremblyng shokke,
 Murder hadde fixed her lastyng brande
 Upon hys breste and looke.

XXII.

Ye murderer fledde, pursued by helle,
 Botte whither none e'er knew;
 'Twas thus those antient barons felle,
 Ye lords of Rothenfluh.

The weather, which had been threatening for the last hou

now broke into a shower of rain, which forced us to increase our speed. With the aid of my "*toile cirée*," my upper habiliments and my knapsack escaped a ducking. Half an hour after passing the Brother's Roch we reached the hamlet of Lauterbrunnen, and forthwith sped to the hotel. We found the house crowded with guests, large as it is; and as we could not procure a sleeping apartment, I determined to proceed onwards up the Wengernalp that same evening, "weather or *not* permitting." As for my friend, he bade me adieu, and hiring a *calèche*, he drove off to meet his brother at Interlachen.

After having dined, I proceeded to visit the cascade of the Staubach, the most famous without a doubt in Europe. I confess that I was disappointed. Nothing can be more graceful than the fall of water, but I had become so accustomed to the sight of cascades that I could not appreciate the beauty of that of Staubach—(Dust-Fall). I heard a very pretty song, however, at the falls. It was a duet, sung by two peasant girls.

The Wengernalp is about 6,280 feet above the sea. It is celebrated for the grand view it commands of the Jungfrau Alp. There is a rude inn at the summit, which is kept open during the summer months. Mine host at Lauterbrunnen most solemnly assured me that I would find neither board nor lodging on the Wengernalp that night, and recommended me by all means to stay with him. Thinking, however, that he might have an interested motive in the advice, I determined to pursue my way for better or for worse. I engaged a guide, who relieved me of my knapsack; and about seven o'clock in the evening I arrived at the summit of the mountain, completely drenched to the skin. With much difficulty I procured a bench in the dining-room to stretch my wearied limbs upon for the night. The inn was crowded with ladies and gentlemen. A large fire was kept up in the saloon, so cold was the weather! Heartily fatigued, for I had walked thirty-two miles since the morning, I soon fell asleep, hearing the avalanches crashing about me on all sides.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SECOND DAY IN THE OBERLAND BERNOIS.

"MR. HOBHOUSE and myself are just returned from a journey of lakes and mountains. We have been to the Grindelwald and the Jungfrau, and stood on the summit of the Wengern Alp; and seen torrents of 900 feet in fall, and glaciers of all dimensions. We have heard shepherd's pipes and avalanches, and looked on the clouds panting up from the valleys below us, like the spray of the ocean of hell. Chamouni and that which it inherits, we saw a month ago: but though Mont Blanc is higher, it is not equal in wildness to the Jungfrau, the Eighers, the Shreckhorn, and the Rose Glaciers."—LORD BYRON'S LETTERS, 1816.

The "Hotel de la Jungfrau" was crowded with travellers, or rather tourists, for I think few would be tempted to make the ascent otherwise than for lionising. About twenty of us slept on the saloon floor all night, and a motley company we were,—English, German, Swiss, French, and Americans. One of the Germans declared that he would pass the night with smoke and beer, but a most unanimous shout arose to have him turned out; whereupon the aggressor became penitent, and promised not to annoy us with his *rauchen*, as he called it. Smokers are, generally speaking, the most selfish of animals; they have no sympathy for the olfactory nerves of those in company with them, but puff their detestable drug, the other party *nolens* or *volens*. They seldom inquire if their beastly habit be annoying to their neighbour, and should the latter, overcome with the smell, request the smoker to desist, he is at once regarded as a captious and ill-tempered man. Making chimneys of their own mouths, they cannot understand that others dislike the process. Without exception, too, all people who are in the habit of smoking, are the most filthy in their habits and personal appearance; in proof of which we have merely to examine the title to respectability of those nations who make constant use of the weed. Let us begin where the sun rises—in the east. Here we have the "true believers;" need we quote Buckhardt to prove their filthiness? Following the glorious luminary, we come to the Greeks, Italians, Germans, and in fact the whole of central and southern Europe. Compare any of these races with a well-bred, true Englishman, and which nation will bear the palm for dirt? The orb is now setting, when we arrive at the west—and oh! Brother Jonathan, would that the weed made an exception of you; but, *heu! miserabile dictu*, your floors—your furniture—

your very *beards* attest that you are no cleaner than the rest. Would that smokers had but bowels for others.

About four o'clock the next morning, I was awakened by a knocking and hammering at the door, accompanied with frequent shouts for admission. It proved to be a party of ladies and gentlemen who were anxious to partake of a morsel, before setting out for their descent into the valley of Lauterbrunnen. Their mules and guides were outside waiting for them. Sharp work this, thought I! and I would willingly have laid still an hour or two longer; but all the other occupants of the saloon started up, and immediately unlocked the door to admit the impatient tourists. Finding there was no alternative but to do likewise, I slipped out of the inn and surveyed the splendid scene before me, which the shades of the previous night had prevented my fully enjoying: and what a scene it was!

The Wengernalp, or little Scheideck as it is sometimes called, rises about 6,280 feet above the level of the sea. On its summit, the spot occupied by the inn, perpetual snow is to be found. The mountain is chiefly celebrated for the magnificent view it presents of the Jungfrau, Mönch, and Eiger Alps, which rise to the height of 12,870, 12,670, and 12,270 feet, respectively. The former is called the maiden (Jungfrau)—no man having been able to climb its summit for many years. The success of Jacques Balenat upon Mont Blanc, however, stimulated the emulation of the Bernese hunters; and at length, after many unsuccessful attempts, attended in some instances with loss of life, two brothers of the name of Meyer attained the extreme summit, and planted a standard upon the Jungfrauhorn. The ascent is said to present even greater difficulties than that of Mont Blanc, and is very rarely attempted. Everyone stares at the man who has climbed Mont Blanc, while he who has, perhaps, achieved a more difficult task in ascending the Jungfrau, is not remarked, because half the world cannot distinguish the latter mountain from Ben Nevis, or one of the Cotswald range. Thus it is with many things in this world: appearances but too often outweigh real and unobtrusive merit!

There is an immense valley between the Wengernalp and the Jungfrau, nevertheless the distance appeared to be no more than half a mile, from the magnitude of the surrounding objects, while in reality it covers about fifteen miles of space. The avalanches were falling incessantly. First a small speck was visible on the Jungfrau; gradually it increased in size; it gathered fresh strength and weight with each movement; the snow accumulated from a tiny ball to a gigantic mass; a roar of thunder proclaimed its progress; it fell with a deafening noise, carrying destruction in its path, into the gorge below:—this

was an avalanche. This was the destroyer of villages, the grave of so many a brave heart. Every five minutes, I am persuaded, there was a fresh avalanche. Of course, those I now beheld were small as compared with those of spring, when the sun and wind both combine to dislodge the snow, and hurl it far and near. The avalanches of summer seldom do mischief. They never exceed their customary limits; they crash where all is solitude; and the peasant's hut is seen far out of harm's way. Byron said true when he declared the Jungfrau to exceed Mont Blanc in wildness.

I breakfasted as soon as possible, and departed down the mountain again. This time I descended by the opposite side, passing the Mönch and Eiger in view. The path was steep and broken, and, before I reached the valley of Grindelwald, I lost my way in a wood of firs. At length I reached the river Aar, crossing which I took the road to the village of Grindelwald.

Switzerland undoubtedly can boast of the finest hotels in the world. In the large towns, such as Geneva, their magnificence did not surprise me, for it was to be expected; but when I found that the most distant valleys contained the same princely structures, I was certainly astonished. Grindelwald was an instance of this. The hotel was the chief feature in the village; in fact, I may say, it formed not an unimportant half of the whole buildings. In its extensive yards were to be seen carriages of the most elegant description. Footmen and grooms lounging about, and cracking jokes with the pretty Bernese washerwomen, who would give the saucy fellows, every now and then, a slap on the face with their battering boards. Bells ringing in all directions. Guides setting out or returning. A smiling landlord. A large and wealthy set of guests. These were the sure tokens of prosperity, and explained to me at a glance the reasons for the superiority of Swiss hotels over those of other countries. My wonder vanished, and, as I entered the house, I received the bows of the planet, and his attendant satellites, the *garçons*, as "a matter of course."

The village of Grindelwald is very pretty, but there is not much to be seen in it. William III. of Prussia visited it when he made the tour of Switzerland. His name is to be seen in the strangers' book at the hotel. The volume which contains the relic is very carefully preserved by the landlord, who produces it willingly to any guest who may have the curiosity to examine the royal autograph. It is said that the monarch wrote his name with a pen made of an eagle's quill, which the curate of the village knowingly presented to him, in allusion to the mighty enemy he had assisted to conquer. The only other object worthy of attention in Grindelwald is a stone erected

to the memory of a young clergyman, M. Aimé Mouron, who perished on the lower glacier of Grindelwald, in the year 1821. He was walking incautiously, his foot slipped, and he fell into a deep chasm. After considerable search, his body was found, dreadfully cut and mangled. Had assistance been at hand, he might have been saved; as it happened, his death must have been cruel and lingering.

The valley of Grindelwald is considered the finest in Switzerland. It is fresh and blooming, and scattered over with trees and picturesque cottages. It is finely sloped with lawns of rich turf, and is enclosed on all sides by snowy mountains. It contains the two largest and most beautiful glaciers in the Oberland, —those known by the names of Upper and Lower. They are situated at the base of the Wetterhorn, and extend across the valley to the Shreckhorn. On the east side they skirt fertile meadows to the verge of the rising grounds of the Great Scheideck. Both the glaciers are of about equal size, being nearly one mile broad at the extremities approaching the village, and widening as they fall back to their source, beside the Wetterhorn, to six miles. They were formerly the sole communication between the cantons of Berne and the Vallais; but at the end of the seventeenth century the lower glacier advanced so much beyond its previous limits that the river Lütschin was forced into a different channel, and thus destroyed the route.

After visiting the upper glacier, I commenced the ascent of the Great Scheideck, in company with the guide whom I had hired at Lauterbrunnen. He urged me not to escape climbing the Faulhorn; but I had heard that it was a mere repetition of the Wengernalp, and, being anxious to press on, I declined. I found the ascent of the Scheideck sufficiently tedious. I was thoroughly knocked up with the excessive journey of the previous day, and want of sleep and rest at night. Never before did mountain appear to me so high and uninteresting as the one I was now toiling up. We reached the Bach Alp, down which flows the Bergelbach torrent, and I inquired of my guide if we were at the summit.

"Summit, Herr Graf!" cried he; "we are not yet at the Ross Alp."

It was an hour before we arrived at the Ross Alp, where there is a glorious view of the Wetterhorn and the whole valley of Grindelwald. I sat down, and was about to congratulate myself on having achieved "the passage of the Scheideck," when my companion remarked that if we did not bestir ourselves we should not arrive at Meyringen that night.

"What! are we not at the summit of the Scheideck?"

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"Herr Graf, we have not yet passed the Eselsrücken (Ass's Back)."

I thought I should have fainted; but there was no help for it: on I must. I would have given much for an "ass's back" at that moment to have conveyed me to its namesake. I wetted my mouth and face at a small stream, and nerved my limbs for another attempt. In half an hour I was on the *auberge* of the Eselsrücken, and seated at a table covered with bread and cheese. The *ordinaire* was served by mine host of the Ass.

The road to the valley of Hasli is all descent. It lies through a thick forest, and is without exception the most picturesque and charming one in Switzerland. It abounds with cascades, and is full of enchanting spots that appear like fairy groves. In one of these I took an hour's sleep; after which I felt so much refreshed that I walked rapidly on to make up for lost time. We passed the village of Rosenlani, where there are baths, glanced at the lovely glacier for some time, and in about an hour reached the end of the forest, where we were rewarded by a view of the valley of Hasli. At our feet stood the village of Meyringen. Instead of entering that evening I descended a little to the left, and engaged rooms in the Hotel von Reichenbach. My bedroom window commanded a view of the celebrated falls of the same name. What more could I desire?

THE SACRIFICE.

FOUNDED UPON FACT.

It was a sultry afternoon in one of the finest summers that had ever blessed the inhabitants of Farfield, a pretty village in one of the northern counties of England. A couch was drawn near the open window of a neat vine-embosomed cottage, at the entrance of the village, and the pale-face of its occupant was looking anxiously into a curiously-shaped mirror, hung against the side of the window in such a fashion, that it reflected the paved walk and the porch, making all comers and goers plainly visible to the invalid. An elderly lady sat knitting near; from

time to time addressing a common-place observation to her companion, who gave her but scant answers, appearing wholly absorbed in watching for somebody or something outside.

The occupant of the couch was an interesting woman of some two or three and thirty years of age; but her placid brow, notwithstanding her present anxiety, the purity of her complexion, and the innocent, childlike expression of her soft, dark eye, made her appear several years younger. Jane Seymour was, indeed, a happy creature by temperament, and by principle happy, though my readers will wonder how this could be, when they learn that an injury of the spine had confined her to a reclining position for twelve years. It was impossible for her to sit upright, and her lower limbs were dwindled almost to the size of those of an infant, from total inaction, while her hands were attenuated to a degree that was painful for the unaccustomed to behold. Yet she was happy in charitable occupations, happy in her dear old mother, happy in the pretty garden and the scent of the flowers beneath her window, and the romantic prospect beyond, and, above all, happy in her lover.

"In her lover!" methinks I hear some lively girl of eighteen exclaim, with a start. "Really, the way in which some people go on!—to think of a poor, crippled creature like *that* having a lover!"

You may laugh, young lady, and disbelieve my tale, but nevertheless it is a true one; and William Graham was not one, either, of whom the proudest beauty, in the heyday of her youth, needed to have been ashamed; for the light of intellect encircled his manly brow as with a halo, and from his dark, blue eye beamed a welcome, and a kindliness for every living creature. He had well testified his noble nature by his constancy, for he had first loved his Jane when she was the life and soul of every circle into which she entered, and he loved her still, when, save for the activity of her powerful mind, she had endured years of an almost vegetable existence. Weekly he journeyed many miles across the country, with some new book, engraving, or song, to please his gentle betrothed; and had there been at hand a poet's eye to look upon the pair, a poet's pen to immortalize them, their pure unearthly affection had formed the subject of as noble a poem as ever thrilled the hearts of a million readers.

It was this devoted lover for whom Jane Seymour was looking so anxiously this afternoon. He was very late, for he usually came to dinner at one, and it was now past four o'clock; and one of those presentiments which sometimes cloud the spirits of us all, was oppressing the clear mind and loving heart

of the invalid, and suggesting a thousand fears of evil accident to him whose visits were weekly jubilees.

"Mother, when will he come? What can he be doing? He was never late before!" sighed forth, for the twentieth time, the anxious gazer.

Even as she spoke, the little green gate at the bottom of the garden opened and closed again, and William Graham strode hastily up the paved walk, and directly into the room where the mother and daughter were awaiting him. A rosy tint suffused the pale countenance of the invalid, as her lover bent over her couch, and tenderly inquired after her health.

"And now," said the mother, when the first greetings were past, "you are bound to give an account of yourself, Mr. William. How is it that you are so late? I had made *such* a nice little cherry pudding, just enough for us three."

"You may be sure, dear Mrs. Seymour," replied the young man, "that I was as sorry as you could be, to waste so much of the happiest day of my week. The truth is, there has been a slight accident. Our train ran into another, near the station. Do not be alarmed, dearest," continued he, in answer to the startled expression of Jane's dark eye; "do not be alarmed, for no lives were lost. We happened to be proceeding rather slowly, and the engine-driver succeeded in stopping the engine just in time. One or two people were bruised; and a young girl of about seventeen, who was in the same carriage with me, fainted away, and remained insensible for a long time. As she was quite alone, I could not think of leaving her; and as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, I saw her safe home. Her father lives about a mile from hence, and he pressed me so urgently to stay and dine with them, that I could not refuse without giving offence, though I was thinking of you all the time, knowing how anxious you would be until I made my appearance."

"Never mind that, dear William, you could not have acted otherwise."

"I often think, Jane, you have too little society. I wish you would allow me to introduce this sweet young girl to you and your mother. She would cheer the lonely days between my visits. If you like, I will contrive it next time I come."

Jane gratefully consented to the arrangement, and the rest of the evening was passed in their usual manner. Books and flowers, loving discussions, and a twilight song or two, from Jane, who still retained her pleasing voice, filled up the happy hours until bed-time. William remained at the cottage all night, and left by an early train next morning.

The end of the week came, and the lover made his usual appearance at Vine Cottage, but not, as usual, alone. With him came a gentle girl, whose sunny face retained the innocent expression of extreme youth, and who was immediately at home with the interesting invalid and her mother. Jane was delighted with Annie Dalton, and, between the two, there sprang up an intimacy that added much to the happiness of each. The hours now passed more rapidly than ever, as Jane and Annie sang together some simple duet, or, occupying themselves in needlework, listened with delight to the tones of William's manly voice, as he read aloud the last new poem, or popular work of fiction.

Alas, change will invade the most tranquil scene! Not long may we frail human creatures remain in the enjoyment of the blisfullest monotony. An unwitting foe had been introduced into this paradise—a most innocent Satan, who, all unconsciously and unintentionally, was destined to change the face of things in happy Vine Cottage. It was not very long ere Jane Seymour began to experience feelings which, until now, had never disturbed her serenity, and her brow contracted with the bitterest of all anguish as she watched in her tell-tale mirror the wanderings of her lover and her friend in the little garden before the cottage, their lingerings under the trelliced porch, by the light of the young moon. Still more unbearable was the silence that often ensued on their return to the little parlour; a silence so evident and protracted, that her good mother would often exclaim, "Why, bless me!—are you all asleep? We'll have in the candles, and then, Mr. William, you will, perhaps, give us a little of your conversation!"

So matters went on all the summer. William and Annie were almost unknowingly becoming more and more fond of each other; and the heart of poor Jane was loaded with a sorrow that threatened to drain her very life's-blood. Unfortunately, no kind, discerning friend was near, to interpose a word of warning where it was so sadly needed. Could William Graham have been made aware of his growing infidelity to the being whose heart was irrevocably intertwined with his, he would have summoned up his manly energy, and resisted the fatal attractions of the too lovely Annie Dalton. But autumn came, and it was too late.

One evening, William and Annie were pacing slowly up and down the paved walk, and Jane was watching them in the window mirror. There had been a high wind all the day, and branches of trees and withered leaves were strewed over the garden, making a mournful crunching under the feet. The evening was dull and cheerless, and the dying breeze went

moaning round the cottage, rattling the old casements, and sighing through the tops of the giant poplars. The breeze subsided, and a few drops of rain began to fall, unheeded by the couple in the garden, who still remained in deep conversation. Jane could see that Annie was weeping, and that William avoided looking towards her as sedulously as though there were deadly peril in the glance. The invalid breathed a prayer to heaven, and, summoning up all her resolution, she requested her mother, in a tone of indifference, to tell the young people outside that they had better come in from the rain. Mrs. Seymour looked hard at her daughter, for, obtuse as she was, she began to think that all was not as it ought to be; but she saw nothing that could afford a clue to the actual position of affairs in the marble countenance which so rigidly preserved its self-possession.

William and Annie came in immediately upon being summoned, and Annie, walking to the chair where she had deposited her bonnet, hastily put it on, and folded her shawl around her: then, going up to Miss Seymour, offered to make her adieu, saying that her parents expected her home early that evening. But Jane was prepared for this excuse.

"Sit down, Annie," said she, in so hollow a voice that both William and Miss Dalton started; "sit down: I wish to talk to you a little."

Happily, good Mrs. Seymour was out of the room upon some hospitable errand, for poor Jane felt that her hard-won tranquillity of manner would all have vanished before one commonplace or *mal-apropos* remark. William and Annie spoke not a word, but waited tremblingly until the invalid should speak again.

"William," at length she murmured, making a violent effort for composure, "I see that you love Annie, and I think that Annie loves you."

William raised his head, with his conflicting emotions depicted upon his countenance, and, struggling in vain to speak, drooped it upon his bosom again, and covered his face with his hands.

"My friend, I do not wish to distress you," Jane resumed; "I will not reproach you, for I cannot wonder that you prefer sweet Annie Dalton to me,—a young, innocent creature, with the roses of health upon her cheek, to a pining invalid, grown old and overwise, may-be, with sorrow and suffering, and who repents that she did not long ago absolve you from your disinterested constancy."

William eagerly interrupted the unselfish speaker.

"Jane, dear Jane," cried he, "I cannot accept your generous

resignation. I confess with shame and sorrow that my heart has unconsciously wandered towards another—and you see my excuse,” added he, in a lower tone; “but as for belonging to any other than you, so long as you shall live, that will I never! Dearest, accept my unfeigned contrition, and let us once more be to each other as we have hitherto been.”

“It is impossible! William, in answering thus, you do not know yourself. Spare me; I cannot bear much more,” and the anguished woman raised her eyes to heaven, while her pale lips murmured a prayer for support and guidance. At length, “Give me your hands,” said she, “my dear friends, and in making each other's happiness you will gradually restore mine.”

There were bitter struggles, and hot tears of contrition, but the gentle though firm will of the invalid finally triumphed: and William and Annie joined hands and hearts before the altar of the sacrifice, that old-fashioned, chintz-covered sofa.

Mr. and Mrs. Dalton had become Jane Seymour's intimate friends, and she knew well from several expressions which they had uttered in her presence that there would be no opposition on their parts to their daughter's marriage with William Graham.

The few necessary arrangements being completed, William and Annie stood before the altar of the village church, and a red October sun witnessed the union of as lovely a pair as had ever plighted troth within those old walls.

The breakfast was prepared at Mrs. Seymour's house, by express desire of the strong-hearted invalid. Cheerfully and calmly did she smile upon the lovely bride, when, in her neat travelling costume, she bent over her, to give her the last kiss; and if there were a weary struggle within the heart of Jane Seymour when William, in his turn, approached to utter a trembling farewell, all outward signs of it were well suppressed. The coach drove away from the door, and Mrs. Seymour, returning within, with the father and mother of the bride, found that her daughter had fainted away.

Miss Seymour lived to reap the reward of her generous sacrifice. Perfectly fitted for each other, William and Annie were the happiest couple in all Farfield; and their rosy little ones were never so delighted as when they might play around the couch of dear, kind, self-styled Aunt Jane.

THE FIRST AUTUMN LEAF.

BY C. E. NUGENT.

THE dawn of day illum'd the eastern sky,
The birds loud hymned their matin melody ;
A ray through the flower-girt lattice broke,
It bid my dreamings cease, and I awoke.
I op'd the casement, gazed, musing, forth
On the all-hailing, dew-bespangled earth ;
A breeze from the hill-side, whispering low,
Wafting sweet odours o'er my fever'd brow,
All gently stirred a beech-tree, towering high :
A leaf, the first I'd mark'd, fell tremblingly,
As loath to leave the parent stem, where all
Its summer friends still held their festival.
Methought 'twas heedless youth, ere yet decay
Had warning told that bloom must pass away.
Its young companions all around were there,
The light of morn, the dews of eve, to share ;
No hues of age, to herald wintry death ;
The genial sun above, bright flowers beneath ;
Smiling the woodland, green-clad was the hill ;
No clouds gloom'd dark, and it was summer still.
That early autumn leaf I sought and found,
As lonely there it rested on the ground ;
I placed it in my bosom,—there it lay,
Until it shrivell'd, faded all away ;
But still remains the truth, first mark'd so well,
The sunny morn that leaf untimely fell,
That, in this world of short-lived joy and sorrow,
Nor youth nor age must count upon the morrow.

THE SECRETARY.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK,"—"GUARDS, HUSSARS, AND
INFANTRY,"—"THE BEAUTY OF THE RHINE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

"Fill the bright goblet, spread the festive board,
Summon the gay, the noble, and the fair;
Through the loved hall in joyous concert joined,
Let mirth and music sound the dirge of care,
But ask thou not if happiness be there?
If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throes?
Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear?
Lift not the festal mask,—enough to know
No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe."

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

"STRANGE assortment there," remarked Colonel Handstop to his companion, as the four-oar glided past their more humble wherry. "Surely Dropmore cannot seriously intend to marry the girl, and yet now he is everlastingly in the city."

"Impossible to say," answered the other; "but, as I just remarked, money will occasionally create wonders. And yet I should not imagine it necessary for the only son of the Marquis of Blanchard to sell himself for a few thousands."

"Nay, nay," was the reply; "not a few thousands only, but rather say upwards of a million, for to that extent is Vernon's property estimated."

"Well then, say a million," replied the colonel, "and I acknowledge that to be a sum likely to tempt any man to his destruction; but, if I mistake not, the old peer in Grosvenor-square will never sanction the arrangement, not though the alderman's property were double what you name."

"And it is for that reason I am more than half inclined to fancy the arrangement is as yet hidden from Lord Blanchard's knowledge. But if the alderman be as shrewd as Elms frequently assures me is the case, I opine he will strenuously object

to being played with much longer, as he now evidently is. I know not why," continued Mr. Cooley, "but whenever accident throws me in Dropmore's way, he invariably looks so confoundedly out of health, or out of humour, that I care little to seek his companionship; but, meet him when and where you will, Sir George is certain to appear at his elbow."

"Humph!" drily replied the other. "I doubt not but the baronet has his reasons for paying the devoted attention which he bestows on this juvenile scion of nobility; but time will show, and that ere many months have passed, or I am much mistaken in my suppositions."

"Likely enough," joined in the East Indian; "but they can't both marry the girl, can they?"

"Not both, truly," laughingly answered his friend; "but, because *that* is an impossibility, it does not follow as a consequence that they cannot each appropriate to himself a portion of the spoil."

"Certainly not," said Mr. Cooley; "but surely you would not insinuate that Sir George Elms would stoop to any act so decidedly ungentlemanlike?"

"Who, I?" inquired the colonel, with an affectation of surprise,—"*I* wish to insinuate anything against my friend Elms? About the last man in the world who would dream of committing so unheard-of an act. What *could* have forced such a notion on your mind, Cooley? *I* insinuate anything against Elms? Preposterous! absurd!" and having thus vented his virtuous indignation, the two gentlemen individually expressed their great admiration and regard for the absent person, although fully convinced in their own minds that he was as deep and designing a profligate as could have been discovered throughout town. But it so chanced that the aquatic wanderers were not so sufficiently intimate with each other as to know how far they might abuse their mutual friend in his absence, and accordingly they judged the more prudent course to pursue would be to utter a good modicum of unqualified praise, although, at the very moment they were so extolling him, each party was perfectly aware of the more than probable insincerity of the other.

Notwithstanding the cautious mode in which these gentlemen thought proper to word their remarks, when speaking of the party recently passed, they were yet a considerable distance from their destination when they came to the silent conclusion that their acquaintance, Lord Dropmore, was in a fair way of adding to the number of victims periodically sacrificed about London,—a consummation to be reached through the exertions of his inseparable friend, Sir George, who, they justly estimated, would not undergo the exertions to which he was subjected

without good and sufficient expectation of being rewarded for his work.

"Here we are," exclaimed Mr. Cooley, as their boat touched the small jetty near the "Ship," "and a very pleasant pull we've had. Eh, Handstop, what say you?"

"Delightful," answered the gentleman appealed to; "but now for the after business of the day. Where shall we dine?"

"No trifling matter to decide on," quoth the nabob. "But what say you to the hotel where we are? Good house—civil people—cool wine—and, what's more, close at hand."

"With all my heart," was the reply; "so let's in at once, order dinner, and then take a stroll until our banquet is ready."

That most important affair was speedily arranged. The dinner was ordered—wines placed in ice, and the waiters placed in silk stockings,—when, seeing all progressing as their utmost anticipations could have wished, Mr. Cooley, taking his friend's arm, sallied forth into the streets.

"Magnificent structure!" exclaimed Colonel Handstop, as together the two slowly paced the beautiful courtyards of the Hospital.

"Yes; fine edifice enough," replied his companion, "but nothing equal to the buildings we have in India. By the Great Mogul, sir, I've seen—"

What it was Mr. Cooley had been so fortunate as to obtain a sight of yet remains an enigma, for, at the instant when he was about to enlighten his listener, a gentle pressure on his arm caused him for the time to forego his recital, and, following the direction of the colonel's gaze, the honourable Mark observed the very persons turning an angle of the building whose excursion had already afforded them such an excellent topic for conversation.

Equally visible to each other were the two parties; and, furthermore, anticipating some amusement from a reacquaintance with the worthy alderman, Mr. Cooley resolved not to let so excellent an opportunity pass unheeded; therefore, quickening his pace, and in a measure forcing his companion with him, in a few seconds they joined the larger number.

"Delighted to meet you, gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Vernon, on recognizing the addition to their group. "Beautiful day—charming spot, Mr. Cooley."

"Ah, colonel," he continued, "how d'ye do,—never found your way to Gracechurch Street since the day——"

Here an admonitory look from the baronet quelled, or at least damped, the loquacity of the speaker.

"Yes, ha—" he exclaimed, stammering, "exactly, I mean—not since the day you were last there."

"Most assuredly not since the period you allude to," replied the other, laughing.

"So I thought," said the alderman, whose spirits had attained considerable elasticity from his trip; "but now that we *have* met once again, what say you to our dining together, eh?"

"Nothing in the world can give me greater pleasure," replied the colonel, to whom the invitation was more particularly addressed.

"Nothing will afford me such happiness," joined in the oriental.

"And I am sure your ludship will be charmed," continued Mr. Vernon; "old friends, you know—egad, we'll have a jovial party, what say you, Sir George?"

Sir George accordingly expressed—since it was as useless as impossible to say otherwise—his great satisfaction at the arrangement; but in his inward thoughts most devoutly wished Mr. Cooley in the middle of some impenetrable jungle, and the gallant colonel any where he chose, provided it was not within a hundred miles of the spot where they then stood.

But the thing was now unavoidable; nothing could avert the infliction of their presence; and cursing the untoward chance that brought such unwelcome visitors, he endeavoured to lay his plans so as to avert any indiscreet exposure on the part of the merchant, which might at once lay open and effectually mar his purposed arrangements.

Influenced by the indecision which marked his character, and far from sorry for an interruption which promised to supersede any conclusive arrangement which he anticipated would that evening be expected, Lord Dropmore felt rather relieved than otherwise, at what to him appeared so timely a reprieve; for although he had invited Mr. Vernon to accompany him to Greenwich, with something approaching to an understanding that the long-pending negotiation should be then and there arranged, he felt, as the period drew nigh, most particularly anxious to avoid the discussion, though at the same time fully aware that nothing less than a miracle could extricate him from his numerous difficulties, save the alternative, which he half wished, and yet dreaded to embrace.

As for the alderman, secrecy in the matter was by no means the object most desirable to him,—his ambition was, to behold his daughter married to the heir apparent to a peerage, and little could that vanity be gratified, if publicity were not given to the event. In short, so anxious had he been for concluding the match, that it was with the greatest difficulty Sir George was able to prevent the old merchant from bruiting about the

intelligence, and that solely from a belief of no trivial importance,—viz. that if prematurely made known, Lord Blanchard would detach every acre within his power from his son,—that convinced him of the necessity of silence, at least for a time. But months had now rolled on, since first the parties met in Gracechurch Street; and as neither father nor daughter had advanced their acquaintance one iota further with the family in Grosvenor Square, Mr. Vernon began to pourtray unequivocal demonstrations of rebellion, and with considerable labour and management, the mediator contrived to appoint the day in question for a final adjustment of the preliminaries.

What then could it signify to Mr. Vernon how public the avowal was made?—The time was fast approaching, when he might proclaim his daughter the affianced bride of Lord Dropmore; besides, Colonel Handstop and Mr. Cooley were old friends, both of his lordship and Sir George.—In fact, to this worthy merchant's conception, every thing progressed in accordance with his utmost wish, while on the other hand, each occurrence, as it turned out, inflicted poignant uneasiness on him who was the chief director of the plot, and prime mover of the whole affair.

Having thus in some measure explained the motives which influenced the actions of the masculine part of this ill-assorted *colérie*, we must turn for a moment towards the tacit, yet original, cause of so much plotting, who, leaning on Lord Dropmore's arm, little imagined the various schemes running through the heads of the party; and still less did she dream that she, the mild and gentle Mary, was unwittingly the innocent occasion of the whole.

From the time when we first introduced Mary Vernon to our readers' notice, the elaborate dissertations in favour of Lord Blanchard's family, became not only palatable to the listener, but at length deeply interesting: and as the visits of their titled guest grew more frequent, the fair attraction readily hailed the approach of her new acquaintance with delight, and invariably testified her pleasure at his presence with an unfeigned look of happiness, which her ingenuousness could never have assumed, had it not in reality existed.

Flattered by these demonstrations of partiality in his favour, Lord Dropmore really felt interested in the person whose innocent manner, and ignorance of artificial society, unconsciously and at every interview betrayed her sentiments towards him. Neither was it to be marvelled at, that a girl educated as Mary had been, yet so completely secluded from the world, should naturally fix her attention, and finally her affections, on the

first and only person whose feelings and ideas appeared to flow in the same channel with her own.

Occasionally a spark of curiosity might tempt her to ponder on the singularity of the circumstance of so great an intimacy existing between her father and her friend; and yet fully conscious was she that the numerous members of Lord Dropmore's family were to her parent and herself utter strangers. But these doubts and cogitations were, for the most part, short-lived and evanescent, because fully confident in her father's shrewdness, and her own incapacity of solving matters connected with the etiquette of fashionable life, poor Mary, happy in the enjoyment of the present hour, consoled herself with the reflection, that her natural protector was the best judge as to whom he should admit or exclude; and consequently she went on her way rejoicing, willingly and with all her soul rendering up her best and purest affections to one who possessed neither the power nor the inclination to appreciate the inestimable treasure thus cast, as it were, before him for acceptance.

What his lordship's "intentions" were, as the ladies in Ireland facetiously designate any act of common courtesy, or what his final purpose might have been, Mary neither knew nor inquired. It was enough for her that the only being she had ever met, on whom she could look with an affection different from that which she entertained towards her parent, was continually at her side. Distant anticipations, future probabilities, were to her alike hidden and unsought. All she ever loved and cared for in the world were near, and little heeded Mary Vernon what fate yet held for her in store.

Always happy when Lord Dropmore was present, and joyous from the anticipation of his coming, when absent, the days of that young creature flew rapidly away; and never did a lighter heart, or less clouded brow, cross the pavement of the ancient Hospital than on the day when the rich citizen and his daughter so unexpectedly encountered Colonel Handstop and the oriental on the river.

The honourable Mark was naturally of a cheerful and agreeable temper, and on this occasion seemed determined to exert himself to the uttermost; indeed, had he not enjoyed a most unwonted portion of placidity and constitutional coolness, it would be hard to say how he could have existed so long a period in so irritating and destructive a climate as that in which the greater part of his life had been occupied.

Equally bent on "doing the agreeable," Colonel Handstop resolved to play his part, yet not without a strong hope that, during the course of the evening, something might be extracted

from one party or another, whereby to elucidate the exact nature of the association existing; and, as the sequel proved, the colonel was not far wrong in his calculation.

"Now for dinner," vociferated Mr. Vernon, as the party approached the "Ship," rubbing his hands in anticipation of the gratification about to be vouchsafed to him. "Ready for the feast, my lud?" he inquired, looking towards Lord Dropmore, "business first and pleasure afterwards,—that's my motto. Can't have harder work than eating, though we *have* got a little something to arrange afterwards,—eh, my lord, you understand, eh?" and, by way of making his meaning beyond all doubt intelligible, he applied the forefinger of his right hand to the side of his olfactory nerve, as though by reference to that member his ambiguous hints would be more plainly understood.

"Business after dinner, Mr. Vernon!" cried Colonel Hand-stop, delighted at the opening thus afforded of further investigation. I thought you most piously eschewed all labours of the mind, after so important an exercise of the animal powers; and, if I recollect rightly, you one night asserted at Sir George's that it was much against your inclination, and totally at variance with your habits, to trouble yourself with dry, tedious details, of a complicated nature at such an hour. No, no; don't let us have any business, to-day, but devote all our time and energies to the enjoyment of whatever amusement may offer."

"Aye—but there are more kinds of business than disagreeable ones," replied Mr. Vernon; "for instance, his lordship, myself, and another person, who at present shall be nameless, *may* have some small arrangements to conclude, which may turn out far less troublesome than business generally proves. In short, gentlemen—" but before the loquacious alderman could let out the secret, which he certainly would have done, if permitted, ere the waiters brought in the soup, the baronet saved him the trouble by taking the explanation on himself.

"In short," said Sir George, "Mr. Vernon is pleased to be particularly facetious, to-day, and evidently alludes to the plebeian occupation of settling the account; but dinner will be on the table directly, so let's away, and make what toilette our circumstances will permit;" and seizing the alderman by the bright yellow buttons of his capacious vest, he carried him in triumph to a chamber, there to attempt reasonings and explanations whereby to induce the old gentleman to forego the announcement of the intended marriage, although a measure which he had so long cherished in his heart.

This, however, proved far more difficult than the plotter contemplated; for the elated merchant was so strongly bent on finally fixing the engagement that evening, that it was no

easy task to persuade him to relinquish his intentions. Indeed, to do the baronet justice, he was equally anxious for the marriage as was the father of the lady concerned; but *he* was fully aware, which the citizen was *not*, that, in the event of the business becoming bruited before all the arrangements were completed, it was just as probable as otherwise that some unforeseen occurrence might intervene, at the instigation of the marquis, which would finally and most effectually disconcert their schemes. Not that Sir George cared one farthing for the result of the marriage, as connected with his friend's disseverance from his family; but he cared very much that the ceremony in question should be performed, since it was privately agreed that on the occasion coming to pass a certain sum was to be transferred from the merchant's account in Lombard-street to that of the baronet in Pall-mall.

No one could better fathom the intentions of the two intruders than the baronet; and, in proportion to the anxiety which they evinced to ascertain exactly how the case stood, so was he equally bent upon frustrating their designs, and baulking their fast rising curiosity, for to him it was a matter of great import that not a chance should be given of having the thing noised abroad until the victim was irretrievably entangled in the net.

Nothing could have induced the alderman to listen to Sir George's mode of reasoning, had he not momentarily repeated the heavy pecuniary loss which must be suffered, provided the marquis's displeasure was called forth; and, although little flattering to the vanity of the merchant, the baronet found himself compelled to confess that, however much the match might be wished for by the son, yet, until measures had judiciously been taken for breaking it to the father, it were as well not too publicly to promulgate the matter.

"Well, well," said Mr. Vernon, somewhat testily, after an impatient hearing of his mentor, "what you say is all very well, I dare say; but, truth to tell, I understand but little of it. Look-ye, Sir George, you and I ought to understand each other, by this time, so let's not have any useless entanglements whatever; and now mark you, Sir George, I'm getting most considerably tired of the way in which *you* carry on business, and I think it full time, and only fair, that my turn should come now. Here have I been kept off and on by excuses, and so many things have been hourly started to upset my plans, that were I anything of a predestinarian, I should pitch the whole thing overboard."

"But, my dear sir," interrupted the baronet, "do you not see how necessary further secrecy must be for the completion of our plans? All progresses well, as yet; Miss Vernon is evi-

dently much attached to Lord Dropmore, and you cannot fail in perceiving how unequivocally her affection is returned. Why, then, should you mar the happiness of two persons so exactly suited for each other, merely to gratify a desire you may have of proclaiming the intended marriage to the world, a few days sooner than prudence would dictate?"

"That's all very well," interrupted the alderman; "but by what means, if the union proves so extremely disagreeable to Lord Blanchard *now*, by what means is it to be made so wondrously desirable hereafter?"

"Timely explanations, and judiciously breaking the information, will do much," was the ready reply. "Besides which, we must reckon on the great influence which his son possesses over him; and when the marquis becomes fully aware how completely his son's happiness depends upon the union, and when a personal acquaintance with Miss Vernon shall have removed any impression which, however erroneous and absurd, you are yourself aware is sometimes entertained by the higher branches of the aristocracy against unequal marriages—"

"Unequal, indeed!" broke forth the merchant, "unequal, truly, if the purse be the criterion to judge by."

"True," interposed the other, "but I was on the point of observing, when the Marquis has the gratification of making your and your daughter's acquaintance, all scruples must immediately vanish, and your utmost wishes will be attained."

So spoke the baronet; but very different were his thoughts, seeing that he well knew to the contrary; but as it suited his convenience to urge that line of argument, little cared he whether the statements adduced had their origin in fact, or were merely the offspring of his prolific brain. "Yet," he continued, "there is one way by which your daughter's rank may be ensured."

"And your ten thousand pounds paid," drily added the merchant.

"Exactly," said Sir George, nothing heeding the cool and sarcastic tone in which the last remark was uttered, "exactly, Mr. Vernon; and the way to attain that end, is by a private marriage. Why not let us persuade Lord Dropmore of the necessity of taking a step which his own inclination has already prompted him to propose; and by which means, even if the marquis should remain obdurate, the title which you so greatly covet must descend to your daughter. There is but one drawback to the plan, and that is——"

"Lord Blanchard's unentailed property," chimed in Mr. Vernon—"I understand; but even should we lose that, let happen what may, Mary will have no trifling sum of her own, when of

age. You look astonished, Sir George," continued the alderman, "but such is the case; for a short time since, when embarked in an extensive speculation, by the favourable result of which, I more than doubled my property, I resolved, in case of any future temptation, to place a large portion out of my power, and vest it in the name of trustees for my only child."

"I never heard that before," exclaimed the baronet, in accents sufficiently expressive of surprise. "Do you mean, my dear sir, that Miss Vernon *must*, when of age, inherit a large property, entirely free from the controul of any one?"

"Did I not say so?" replied the other; "but that is no reason why Lord Dropmore should be deprived of his father's unentailed possessions."

"None in the world," muttered the baronet, musing rather than attending to his companion—"none in the world, sir; but this is a very strange business, my dear Mr. Vernon, never heard a word of it before; I'm astonished at your not having mentioned the circumstance to me."

"Mention what circumstance?" inquired the merchant.

"Why, regarding your daughter's fortune," was the reply.

"Why *should* I have mentioned it, Sir George?" said the other, "and perhaps it would have been as well had I not named it now; but what's done, can't be mended; but here comes the waiter to announce dinner, and that finished, we'll talk over the matter fully."

"As you will, my good sir," replied the other, "surely you are the best judge;" and, delighted at the news which he had so unexpectedly gained, although thereby his entire plans must be changed, the baronet proceeded to make the necessary arrangements in his toilet; and, with a combination of joyous, though not yet digested, schemes flitting through his brain, he assumed the most prepossessing smile his features were capable of portraying, and straightway descended from his apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

"Embarrassed eye and blushing cheek,
Pleasure, and shame, and fear bespeak."

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

On entering the apartment where it was intended dinner should be served, the baronet, brief as had been the period bestowed on his toilet, found his companion in the recent dialogue had

already preceded him to the room. Dinner soon commenced ; and, for a short time, conversation made way for the performance of other duties which, if not actually carried on in absolute silence, betokened how little disposed were the performers to tolerate interruption during their labours. But as the banquet proceeded, and appetite became in a degree appeased, the natural love of conversation resumed its place.

"Excellent hock this, my lord," remarked the alderman, endeavouring to articulate at the imminent risk of suffocation. "May I have the honour?" and bowing to his intended son-in-law, he held his glass to a waiter, for a tenth edition of the delightfully cool beverage.

"Extremely good wine, my dear sir," remarked Sir George Elms, "and iced to exactly the proper temperature."

"To ice wine correctly requires considerable judgment," said Mr. Vernon, delivering his opinion in a decided tone, calculated to awe any rash being who might dare to argue against so incontrovertible a fact.

"Easy to keep wine cool in this country," observed Mr. Cooley ; "not so in India, though—what d'ye think? I've witnessed the temperature to vary in so great a degree, that persons have been known to fish on one side of a river in the shade, and then actually boil the produce of their sport in the other."

"Catch fish and boil them in the same stream?" exclaimed Mr. Vernon.

"Nothing more common, my dear sir," was the reply. "You appear to have but a small notion of the manifold wonders to be met with in the east."

"Unfortunately, Cooley," replied Lord Dropmore, "in this less favoured country, we are not gifted in an equal degree with the inhabitants of the tropics ; but as long as we find gentlemen who boldly wrestle with the manifold perils and miracles which you relate, and who eventually return to enlighten us on the subject, we derive all the benefit, without sharing the dangers which you have so frequently encountered."

The stories which the honourable Mark was so constantly in the habit of delivering for the benefit of his hearers, increased in wonder as in length ; and, desirous of keeping all parties in excellent humour, Sir George did his utmost in "drawing him out," the more so as the alderman listened to each tale with a childish feeling of pleasure, somewhat similar to the excitement felt by an infant at the first recital of a fairy tale.

While the cloth remained on the table, nothing further was touched on by Mr. Vernon, which could in any degree elucidate the point on which Colonel Handstop and the honourable Mark were so particularly anxious to gain information ; but no sooner

had his daughter withdrawn, than assuming a countenance expressive of considerable importance, he requested all present to replenish their glasses, as he was desirous of proposing a toast; and, on his directions being complied with, without preface or circumlocution he instantly gave, "My intended son-in-law."

Of all the extravagancies which it was deemed possible the worthy citizen might in his ignorance or obstinacy have committed, this sudden outbreak and rebellion against the rules and ordinances which for so many months he had bowed to, perfectly astounded the baronet, who, wholly unprepared for such an *exposè*, was for the instant incapable of action.

As for Lord Dropmore, he had now become so entangled in the business, and so perfectly aware of the next to impossible chance of extrication, that he sat unmoved, patiently waiting to follow up whatever line of conduct his friend the baronet might judge proper to favour him with a clue to. Not so, however, did the gallant colonel receive the proposed toast; but raising his glass towards his lips, he there poised the crystal goblet, as if waiting for the conclusion of the sentence which, as yet, had not transpired.

"Your intended son-in-law, Mr. Vernon," urbanely echoed the oriental.

"Are we to be favoured with the name of the fortunate individual?" inquired the colonel, in his most insinuating tone.

"That would be hardly fair," said Sir George, coming at length to the rescue; "for possibly Mr. Vernon may not at this moment feel disposed to divulge who the gentleman may be; and assuredly it is not for *us* to press so delicate a matter, when our worthy friend, who is of course principally interested, declines giving further information."

"I perfectly agree with you. Elms," chimed in his lordship; "and I am confident neither Cooley nor the colonel would, for an instant, desire to press a subject so evidently calculated to hurt Mr. Vernon's feelings."

"How d'y'e mean, my lud?" hastily exclaimed the gentleman in possession of such extreme delicacy. "Hurt my feelings? no such thing, I assure you; and as for the name of my intended—"

"Your daughter's intended, I presume," interrupted Mr. Cooley, not wishing the orator to swerve from the point.

"Well, well," he continued, "my daughter's intended, if you like that better—but isn't it all the same? pshaw! But as I was saying, gentlemen, as for divulging his name, that is the very thing I want to do, if Sir George, there, would but let me." And turning towards the baronet, he endeavoured to instil upon his features a far greater portion of intelligence than he could by possibility lay claim to.

"Ah, Sir George, eh!" exclaimed the inquisitive gentleman, smiling. "May we congratulate you, Elms, on your good fortune? This is really a most unexpected piece of information."

"Would it were true," thought the party addressed; but, though well knowing how utterly false the supposition was, he assumed a manner so little calculated to allay the supposition, that others besides Mr. Cooley and the colonel might well have been pardoned for remaining deceived.

To allow a report so diametrically opposite to his wishes to gain circulation, was no part of Mr. Vernon's intention; and the baronet's demeanour not having escaped his penetration, he hastened to remedy the mischief he had thus unwittingly committed.

"I did not say it was, Sir George," began the alderman, "I merely said—"

"Of course not, my dear sir," replied Dropmore, "no one can accuse you of that indiscretion: the secret has escaped without blame being attached to any one—mere chance. Elms, your good health, and happiness and prosperity to you. And now, Mr. Vernon, with your permission, I will offer my humble services in escorting the fair bride elect during a short walk until, having finished your wine, you may feel disposed to summon the boatmen for our return;" and, in spite of the alderman's desperate attempts at explanation, which, by the bye, were most effectually crushed in the bud by the baronet's praiseworthy interference, the young nobleman quitted the room, leaving the Honourable Mark Cooley and his friend Colonel Handstop under the full impression that the baronet was the man destined to receive the hand of the young heiress; and that Lord Dropmore had so far interested himself in the affair, solely out of friendship towards Sir George.

By his indiscretion, the unguarded merchant had allowed a supposition to exist, than which nothing could have been less agreeable to himself; yet, accustomed as he was to bow before Sir George's "method of doing business," as he was pleased to term it, and seeing the unwished for misunderstanding which his own disobedience had already created, he thought it better to be guided by the expressive, though pantomimic, injunctions of silence, which the baronet was abundantly dealing forth, rather than attempt further interference, which might possibly end in some statement or allusion yet more embarrassing than the former.

Fully satisfied with the result of his diplomacy thus far, and being readily inclined to bear the *onus* of the report that he was about to marry an extremely pretty and very rich girl, Sir George felt not in the least disposed to alter the bias

existing in the minds of his friends ; therefore, quickly changing the subject, he entered with amusing volubility on the numerous topics of the day, much to the amusement of the party, and his own self-approbation.

While thus engaged, the room door was thrown open, and a person for an instant entered the apartment ; but, on discovering his mistake, he muttered a few words of inaudible apology, and withdrew.

"Well now, I call that cool," observed the alderman, who had seen the arrival and departure of the stranger, and on whom the quantity of claret swallowed had somewhat affected his brain—"I say, I call that cool."

"What's cool—the claret?" inquired Mr. Cooley, who, not having witnessed the intrusion, turned towards the alderman for explanation.

"No, sir, the stranger," answered the merchant, waxing wroth.

"Cool stranger, eh?—iced I suppose. By the Great Mogul, that reminds me of a story my brother, who was for a long time attached to the embassy at St. Petersburg, used to tell."

"What was that, sir?" asked Mr. Vernon—his countenance instantly brightening up at the prospect of an addition to the improbabilities already recounted—"How was the gentleman iced, sir?"

"Gentleman iced !—why it was not *one* gentleman only, but it happened to a whole regiment.—One day, the late Emperor Alexander went to a review—horridly cold—troops all out—could'n't stand still for fear of instant death. Well, sir, of course the emperor had an escort,—whole regiment of cuirassiers—fine men : burnished breastplates—all bright : off they went—came to the ground—ordered to halt : the emperor got on his horse—rode forward—forgot the escort—left them standing—dar'n't move for the life of them—tremendous discipline—terrible frost : there they sat, not a muscle changed—time passed—the review went on—lasted three hours : back came the emperor—got into his carriage—ordered escort to march—not a man stirred : emperor furious : ordered the trumpets to sound the advance : band remained stationary : staff got curious—went up to the regiment—there it was, all frozen, men and horses—dead as statues : iced, sir, actually iced : beautiful sight, my brother told me—all stiff—never saw troops so steady."

"That story of your relation exceeds any of your own, Cooley," observed Colonel Handstop ; "but did you see the person who entered this room a few minutes past, and to whose appearance we are indebted for this chilling anecdote?"

"Who was he?" asked Sir George.

"Neither more nor less than the owner of the handsome countenance which, some months ago, afforded us a fruitful topic of conversation for a week."

"Do you mean the person who was one night at the opera in Lord Blanchard's box?" eagerly exclaimed the baronet.

"The identical one," responded the other; "I saw him distinctly when he entered the room, having evidently mistaken this apartment for another, where possibly his friends are dining."

"Very strange," observed the baronet.

"What is there strange in a man mistaking one room for another at an inn, Elms?" asked Mr. Cooley, having heard but the latter part of the conversation.

"Oh, nothing particular," was the reply; and, having dropped some remark respecting the lateness of the hour, the party speedily broke up.

In the meanwhile, Lord Dropmore, delighted at having effected his escape from the annoying persecutions of his would-be relative, easily engaged Mary Vernon to accompany him in a stroll through the park—a much more rational way of occupying the time, than in wasting it in following the example of the other gentlemen; at least such was the young lady's opinion, though we much doubt whether she would have been better pleased, had the others imitated his lordship's example, and extended their gallantry so far as to accompany her in the walk.

As already has been shown, there existed small grounds for any fear on that head; and, undisturbed by the intrusion of a third person, Lord Dropmore and the fair girl leaning on his arm, sauntered towards one of the many delightful walks in the immediate neighbourhood of the hospital.

"I hardly expected to have been so fortunate this evening, Mary, as to engross your society so completely to myself," commenced her companion; "but, exclusive of the great attraction which all who have the happiness of being acquainted with you, *must* acknowledge, I candidly confess the society of Colonel Handstop and the wonder-telling Mr. Cooley, invariably annoys me horridly."

"Wherefore should that be the case, Lord Dropmore?" replied the lady, "surely it is at your option to cultivate their acquaintance or otherwise, according to your wish?"

"Not altogether," answered her companion, "there are so many conflicting reasons and interests which must and ever will weigh against the inclinations of those whom fate has cast into what *we* term society, that, prior to consulting what would best gratify our inclinations, a man is compelled to study what line of conduct is likely to prove most advantageous to his interests."

"Yet, in what way can those persons possibly exercise any influence over you, Lord Dropmore? They never appear to associate with you, nor have I known you to bring them to my father's—although," and Mary blushed and seemed in hesitation at proceeding.

"Although I am there so often, you were about to add," interrupted his lordship, filling up the blank in his fair companion's sentence.

"I merely meant," she replied, "that I do not comprehend why you should tolerate the acquaintance of Colonel Handstop and Mr. Cooley, if so disagreeable to yourself. For my part," she continued, laughing, "it would afford me very trifling regret were I certain of never again beholding the one, or hearing the interminable stories of the other."

"Neither should I, Mary, in as far as my own feelings are concerned; but, unfortunately, they are both persons whose good *word*—whatever may be their *opinion*—for many reasons I should deeply regret to forfeit."

"Pardon my ignorance, Lord Dropmore," eagerly exclaimed his companion, fearful of having given an opinion where her interference might be construed as unfeminine, "I own it was wrong, very wrong in me to speak on a subject with which I am so unacquainted."

"Nay, my dearest Mary," he replied, affectionately taking her hand, "why should you withhold your opinion? There are few whose judgment would be more correct, and none whose statement could be half so sincerely given; and, were I to explain my reasons *why* it would be unadvisable in me to shun these people, I think you would view the matter as I do."

"Not a doubt of it for a moment, Lord Dropmore; and I'm sure, if it will give you the slightest pleasure, I'll contrive to be as civil and attentive to your acquaintances as possible."

"Ten thousand thanks, Mary," replied the young nobleman, sensibly touched by the affectionate demonstration of the artless girl. "I well know the kindness of your heart; but as you are to share the penalty of so doing, it is but just you should in some measure participate in the secret, if by such an appellation I should designate the cause why I am still anxious to enrol these gentlemen in the list of my acquaintances."

"Nay, Lord Dropmore, I do not require any explanation whatever, nor have I a right to exact it; all I care for is that you should not think the worse of me for having inadvertently spoken on the subject."

"Think the worse of you, Mary!" was the immediate reply, as he pressed her unresisting hand to his lips, "nothing earthly can ever effect *that* change in my feelings, and I trust never

will such a measure be attempted. Mary," he continued, in an impassioned tone, which thrilled through every nerve of the timid girl then leaning on his arm, "there is a subject, however, on which I have for a long time past anxiously awaited an opportunity of speaking, and probably never again will so advantageous a moment as the present offer."

Whatever Mary Vernon conjectured as likely to form the leading topic of the expected announcement, it were hard to say, but, if her slightly flushed countenance and downcast look might be taken as evidence, we should opine that the lady felt considerable interest in its disclosure.

"It is needless," continued his lordship, "to trace back the many months that have elapsed since first I had the happiness of claiming your acquaintance, nor need I now state, what you cannot be ignorant of, the value at which I estimate the privilege of being admitted to your friendship. Yet, has it never struck you as singular that, although a frequent guest at your father's house and allowed the felicity of devoting so much of my time to your society as you may have felt inclined to bestow, on no occasion has any return for such kindness been proffered at the hands of my family? Surely, Mary, you must have perceived this?" and, as the fair being to whom the question was addressed uttered no reply, the speaker continued: "Circumstances, Mary, which at present it were needless to detail, led to my introduction to your father; but, from the first moment I beheld yourself, I studied to cultivate an acquaintance which, I candidly acknowledge, commenced by no voluntary act of mine. From the hour when first I dined in Gracechurch Street," and it was not without an effort he brought himself to pronounce the uncouth name, "from that hour you well know how perseveringly I have haunted your presence, nor can you be at any loss to guess where the chief attraction lay, and to what aim my ambition pointed. Mary, dearest Mary, let me but hope that all my flattering expectations have not been vainly cherished," and, drawing her slight form more closely to his side, he seemed to wait for some signal of response; still, not a syllable did the maiden utter, yet, though her lips were closed, some telegraphic tokens must have been exchanged, for, as if enraptured at the result, Lord Dropmore continued.

"Thanks, a thousand thanks, my beloved girl!" he energetically exclaimed. "The fear of having too presumptuously built my every hope of happiness on success, has for weeks past rendered me miserable indeed; but now that I am confident in the blessing of being loved and accepted, all other difficulties sink into comparative insignificance."

In nine cases out of ten it is a sort of understood thing for

ladies, on occasions similar to that we have just described, to shed copious streams of tears, and Mary was too much of a woman to do otherwise than follow the example which, for centuries past, her own sex had adopted.

To afford time for the agitated girl to compose her feelings, and also to withdraw her from the observation of the few persons then wandering about the park, Lord Dropmore led her to one of the seats adjacent, and, unproved, placed himself by her side.

"To a girl of sound sense, and educated as you have been," he continued, "it may, perhaps, appear incredible that among those whose high position in the world should teach them to discard such narrow-minded feelings, some persons have ever been biassed by absurd prejudices, and in no instance more so than in the matrimonial connections which they seem to imagine their children are born only to accomplish.

"In my own case, Mary, I may deem myself peculiarly unfortunate, my father being as obstinately bent on fostering the absurd notion that an alliance with rank should be, above all, the first and paramount guidance in my choice of a wife. That his expectations are not likely to be realized seems but too probable," he added, with a soft pressure on the small hand within his grasp; "yet I would not rashly and unadvisedly offend him, for interested as well as natural reasons. That is the secret which I was so anxious to impart, and if my own Mary would but sanction concealment of our engagement for a short, a very short time, the obstacles to which I allude may be removed or broken down, and, Lord Blanchard's consent once obtained, I will proudly claim my beautiful bride openly before the world, and then, Mary—" but, ere he could conclude the sentence, the noise of persons approaching by a side path towards the spot where they were seated checked his utterance, and, turning round with a darkened brow of displeasure on the intruders, his haughty look sank before the gaze of his own father, accompanied by the once loved Emily Beecher, and the always detested Frederick Garston.

THE EAGLE'S NEST.

BY C. A. M. W.

"One grief, and one alone,
 Could bow thy bright head down,—
 Thou wert a *woman*, and wert left despairing."

"We never met again,
 Since the mournful hour we parted ;
 When anger flashed upon thy brow,
 Though I felt broken-hearted.

"We never met again,
 Though my heart is still unchanging :
 And through this wide and dreary world,
 For a haven hath been ranging.

"We ne'er *shall* meet again,
 Or forgiveness e'er be spoken ;
 And the hearts that love had formed to twine,
 One cold, rash word hath broken."

My brother Philip and myself were orphans ; he was many years my junior, and we resided in a quiet country town. Philip was a practitioner of medicine, assisting an old established doctor, to whose excellent practice he was eventually to succeed. I was my brother's housekeeper, and our neat, pretty dwelling stood on the outskirts of the town. We were an attached brother and sister, and so cheerful and contented with our situation that neither of us had any desire to change it, nor did we give a thought towards matrimony. This, on my own account, was not singular, as I was a decidedly plain person, between thirty and forty years of age, and, truth to tell, I had never received an offer of marriage in my life ; but with Philip the case was far different, for, if *ladies* were privileged to make offers of hands and hearts, I am quite sure that he would have been puzzled among the numerous candidates.

However, the young ladies of our neighbourhood made not the least impression, and the case was very hard upon them, poor things ! for Philip was beautiful in person, and engaging in manner, with a sweet disposition, and an ardent, romantic turn of character. I use the term "beautiful" applied to him

because it the best expresses his feminine and delicate appearance, fair and slender to a fault. He was peculiarly gentle in demeanour; and the sick people all looked for his visits as if he were a ministering angel, soothing and pouring balm on their wounds. There were some individuals who judged him devoid of manly spirit; but I, who knew him well, felt certain that Philip would prove himself resolute and heroic, were those qualities ever called into action,—nay, as brave and dauntless, though inferior in mere physical strength, as any giant of vaunted prowess. It seemed, indeed, unlikely that Philip would ever be enabled to prove whether he was really deficient in courage or daring; for the even tenor of our way was undisturbed, and life presented an unruffled routine of daily duties, Philip's consisting in witnessing and alleviating human suffering, to which he was not hardened or inured (*he* never could be hardened), with unfailing patience, cheerfulness, and unflinching nerve, these being the only means by which his character could be tested. Our maternal aunt had married Mr. Seaforth, a minister of the gospel, resident in the Hebrides, the office being a truly laborious one, parochial duty often extending to several distant islands. On our aunt Seaforth's decease, the pastor's sister, Miss Danser Seaforth, had become the manager of his domestic affairs, taking charge of his little daughter, our cousin Taffine. Mr. Seaforth's father had held the same sacred office to which his son succeeded; and the homestead in a green valley of St. Kilda's Isle, which he inhabited, was an ancestral one, having descended to him in right of his mother, the heiress of a wealthy proprietor (to speak comparatively) of the soil.

When Philip was a child, he had sojourned some months with these relatives, at St. Kilda; nor had he ever forgotten his strange wild playfellow, Taffy Seaforth, her quaint, worthy aunt, Miss Danser, or the grave, simple-hearted minister. Philip well remembered the barren hills and the pasture-grounds, so well stocked with cows and sheep; the springs of pure water amidst the mountain heather, the fishing and the fowling; but, above all else, he remembered the high precipitous rocks and rugged cliffs, the surging ocean, and savage scenery, which had left an impression on his mind never to be effaced.

In all things connected with the sea, Philip felt an unbounded interest; over the mantel-piece of his study, hung a fine large sea-piece, representing a storm, and a noble ship going to pieces on the rocks, with all the terrific accessories of such a scene. Falconer's "Shipwreck" was his favourite poem, and I used to joke him sometimes, and say he must have a mermaid bride, for none else would suit the romantic fancy of Philip Bowes!

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"We must seek her in some lonely isle, Annie," he would smilingly say, "when the sun is setting over the solitude of waves, and the desolate creature sings her wild songs, combing her long hair meanwhile."

"Ah! we must visit St. Kilda, by-and-bye, Philip," said I; "who knows but we may find a mermaid *there*? You have not forgotten Taffine, your early playfellow? You were dear loves in those days—you two; and you used to call her 'little wife!' but Taffy vowed she would never take mortal man for her husband, till he found an eagle's nest, and presented her with the eggs."

"And is that so difficult an exploit, Annie?" demanded Philip.

"So hazardous and difficult, that the most noted fowlers of the islands would hesitate ere they undertook to surprise the sea-eagle in her nest, building as she does among the most inaccessible nooks. The legendary lore of the Hebrides is full of dread tales concerning the hair-breadth escapes, or disastrous fate of the daring adventurers, whose perilous but familiar avocation forms the topic of daily interest to the inhabitants. But *you*, Philip," added I, laughingly, "*did* promise little Taffine, that when you were a 'man grown,' she should have the prize so much coveted; for that you would reach the eyrie, were it guarded by the most tremendous precipice the world contained!"

"Did I say so?" answered Philip, quite excited by the reminiscence; "well, Annie, if our cousin Taffine is as beautiful *now* as she was in childhood, I may, perchance, be tempted yet to redeem my promise."

"Heaven forbid, my dear Philip, that you should ever risk your life for such folly!" ejaculated I, somewhat nervous at the bare thought of such a possibility; but speedily comforted by recollecting, that St. Kilda's Isle, Taffine, and the eagle's eggs, were as the unsubstantial shadows of a dream, vanishing faintly away in the far distance.

We had, indeed, received many hospitable invitations to visit our relatives, but without the slightest prospect of being able to avail ourselves of them, though Philip often said, when he *could* take summer holidays we would together seek the Western Isles. Our intercourse with the Seaforths had been of rare and formal occurrence of late years. We all evidently disliked epistolary communications; while distance, the changes and chances of life, and the pre-occupation of Mr. Seaforth, tended to this result.

But circumstances at length occurred, which enabled us to gratify our long-contemplated wish. The old surgeon died;

Philip took an active partner; and the ensuing summer being a particularly idle one for the medical men, we determined on a six weeks' or two months' leave of absence, for once in a way, and set off for the Hebrides!

Time and space do not permit a detailed account of scenery, or mode of life; and those who are desirous of ascertaining these particulars, may find them in Dr. Johnson's highly interesting account of a tour to the Western Isles of Scotland. We must become acquainted, however, with the individuals beneath Mr. Seaforth's low-roofed dwelling in St. Kilda's, shut in as it was by gently-swelling hills, and facing the south; surrounded, too, by a pleasant garden, protected by high hedge rows, so that it really became difficult to imagine we were in the immediate vicinity of "foaming water and splitting rock."

Our cousin Taffine realized the promise of her childhood, both as regarded beautiful exterior, and wild capricious ways; tempered indeed by gentleness and the affections of a warm, guileless heart. Her education had been strangely conducted; and though not absolutely neglected, yet she was certainly far better versed in the legendary lore of the Islands, than in aught else—save, indeed, the piscatorial and ornithological matters connected in some measure with it—and also in having an oral collection of thrilling Ossianni lays, which she warbled most enchantingly.

I soon saw that Philip had found his "Mermaiden;" but whether the island beauty would ever be transformed into a "bride," seemed a very doubtful contingency; nor could I help fearing such an event might not in the end contribute to my dear brother's happiness; for, with all her fine, generous qualities, Taffine was a self-willed, spoilt girl; but Philip loved at first sight; each day the chains became more strongly rivetted, and the trite, common-place saying, that "love is blind," in *his* case was perfectly exemplified. As to Taffine, she was not long before she discovered her power, for Philip had no dissimulation in his nature; and though I had many reasons to believe that she returned his affection, I could not help feeling very angry when she continually twitted him about his peaceable profession, his ignorance of what she termed "manly sports," and his want of bravery and chivalrous daring. Like many of her sex she loved to *exert* her power, but she was not aware of the pain she was inflicting, nor did Taffine fully appreciate the depth and intensity of Philip's love; and there were many excuses for her, brought up as she had been.

Mr. Seaforth's duties occupied him so entirely, they were so arduous and incessant, occasioning frequent absences from home, that he had not been enabled to devote the time and

observation necessary to forming the character of his beloved and only child, which he would have earnestly desired to do. He was, moreover, a simple and single-hearted man, and saw little to find fault with in his darling Taffy; she was, indeed, an affectionate, dutiful daughter,—she alone had power to soothe her father's jaded spirits, for the minister's frame was not robust, and he often suffered mental as well as physical weariness, for *his* labours were too often thankless ones.

When Miss Danser assured her brother that their Taffy was "just well enough,"—a "good girl in the main," he was ready enough to believe her, and also to coincide with her sagacious observation, "that it was a pity to break down youthful spirits, for trouble was sure enough to come, and do it without help." In short, Miss Danser Seaforth was one of those kind-hearted, easy, sociable old ladies, who take delight in seeing every-body happy in their own way, and so much dislike fault-finding or rebuking, that they fall into the other extreme, and spoil and pet all animated creatures within their reach.

Miss Danser had but one point in her character by which it is possible to distinguish her from the whole race of sleek, comely, conserve, cake, wine-making, elderly spinsters; and this was the peculiar interest and excessive veneration, amounting to idolatry, which she cherished for each and every member of the royal family. The good lady had never been beyond her native islands, but she read the newspapers regularly, and knew all about the Queen's movements, and the health of the royal children, as if she had been a member of the household. Their pictures, or what were sold for such, hung in her bedroom; and when a royal birth or christening took place, Miss Danser became excited to tears; her most gracious Majesty was "poor dear"—or "pretty soul!" but when these melting words were over, no titles or epithets of reverence or grandeur could be found in her vocabulary sufficiently expressive to denote her loyalty and humble attachment. Once, indeed, on reading that the inmates of the royal nurseries were suffering from some of the usual ailments incidental to children, she shut herself up in the store-room, concocting a mysterious preparation, which was carefully placed in a crystal jar, and then thrice carefully packed in a strong, new basket. A letter was written, (poor Miss Danser! she sat up privately all night to indite that letter) and fastened on the lid, the basket being solemnly confided to the care of a captain, whose vessel was bound direct for the port of London!

The missive was addressed to her majesty the Queen! and the captain promised he would forward the sacred package to the Palace. Miss Danser implicitly believed him; and in a few

weeks, when the public were informed of the convalescence of the royal infants, she could contain her secret no longer, but, full of joy and gratitude, exclaimed,—

"Thanks be to heaven, for making *me* the humble instrument of assisting the blessed little angels; it is St. Kilda's cough mixture that has restored them, I doubt not!"

There was yet another member of the minister's family of whom I had never heard; this was a sister, many years Miss Danser's junior, and unlike her in all respects. Miss Lona Seaforth still retained the traces of extreme beauty, a marked likeness existing between her and Taffline, in so far as blooming youth *can* resemble a faded and even premature old age. She was a tall, and still graceful woman, but the traces of sorrow, of the deepest humiliation and pain on her expressive countenance, made it almost unpleasant as a study for any length of time; she never smiled; and when darker moods came over her, which they often did, she shut herself up for weeks in her chamber, or roamed for hours together by the lonely sea-shore. No one, I was informed, ever addressed her at these times; the dark shadows passed away, and she rejoined the family circle again, without question and without comment.

"But what was the origin of such deep-rooted grief?" I asked.

Miss Danser, who was extremely attached to her unhappy sister, briefly replied,—

"It was a disappointment of the affections in early youth, from which poor Lona had never recovered."

But what the history of these hidden trials were, Taffline knew no more than myself; she never remembered aunt Lona, but as she was now; *she* had been Taffline's fitful instructress in the legends of the Western Isles, and in the language of poetry and song. Her morbid dislike to meet strangers, or to encounter the gaze of any eyes, save those so dear and familiar, rendered our better acquaintance almost impossible, her shyness and habitual reserve proving an impassable barrier.

Poor soul! I often found myself thinking of her, and conjuring up all sorts of romantic and bad fancies; and her avoidance of us, at first made me feel very uncomfortable, until I was told she loved and sought solitude at all times, even when they were without guests. How many lonely hours she had known! and on what did she ruminate? Before I left St. Kilda's Isle, my curiosity on this point was fated to be satisfied, and in a way I had no previous expectation of—even by poor Lona herself.

The progress of Philip's passion for the beautiful Taffline, was in accordance with my preconceived notions of my brother's

disposition, for it was as rapid, ardent, and romantic, as love with the Romeo of old; but Taffine was far more like Beatrice than Juliet; and as it has often been remarked, that we love best *our opposites*, perhaps, in this case, Philip's attachment was heightened by the apparent difficulties he had to encounter.

He applied to Mr. Seaforth, for sanction to address his daughter; and with unqualified delight and approbation the father bestowed it, for it had long been the wish of his heart to see Taffine settled in life; and as the wife of Philip Bowes, what more could he desire? But Taffine was not to be so easily won; to her father's grave remonstrances, to her aunt Danser's tender expostulations, she only returned a saucy smile, saying, "Her mind was not made up to wed a landsman—and, above all, a doctor, it was a *horrid* profession—besides, she was not sure that she could live in an inland town,—sea-air was life to her," and a great deal more nonsense to the same effect. Time wore on, and right glad I was to see Philip's spirit roused at last; there was a desperate lover's quarrel between them, which ended by Taffine's declaring, she never would consent to marry him, unless he proved his bravery and love for her at the same time, by exploring a point of cliff to which he had never yet ascended, (Philip had become an expert fowler, and delighted in the recreation), where it was believed by experienced cragsmen, a pair of eagles had built their nest!

"I told you, Philip," said she, when I was a little child, that I would never marry you till you found me an eagle's nest, and brought me the eggs; and you said, when you grew to be a man you would do so! Fulfil your promise now! it is an exploit full of daring, and renown, and danger," she added, more faintly, "but it is *my fancy*! and that is enough for you;—bring me the eggs I covet, and you shall name your reward. I will not say you—nay!"

Philip's raptures were unbounded at her condescension; what a reward for gathering a few eggs on the cliffs—how utterly disproportionate to the trifling service!

"Name something more than *that*!" he exclaimed, "to enable me to prove my entire devotion;" (I will not follow a lover's rhapsodies).

"I *cannot*," was Taffine's somewhat grave answer; "you perhaps do not know what you undertake. Laurie Bonda, the most noted fowler of these Isles, would not engage in this service, without being tempted by an extraordinary offer of remuneration."

"Ah, Laurie Bonda has not my reward before him, dear Taffine. I have a light frame, a sure foot, a steady eye, and

unflinching nerve; and were the eagle's nest where foot of man never yet rested, I would reach their eyrie, and place the eggs in those dainty white hands of thine!"

This conversation took place on a level point of land, washed by the sea waves, and as the word "farewell" fell from Philip's lips, eagerly departing to commence preparations for his bold venture, Lona Seaforth emerged from behind a rock, and stood before the astonished pair.

"Stop, Philip Bowes!" she sternly exclaimed. "I would save this heedless girl from life-long misery; for, in all human probability, she will live to mourn a *murdered* lover—yes—murdered, to gratify an idle whim. Behold *me*—I loved, and was beloved; I mourn the loss of the 'lion-hearted,' *his loss*—mark ye—*not his death*." Turning towards Taffine, she continued, with much solemnity, "Do you love this man?"

Taffine hung her head, blushing and laughing.

"I read your answer," said Lona; "you love him, but you are not worthy of him, Taffine; weed out your vanity, your egotism, and your folly, and then you may prove a fitting bride for Philip Bowes, who is willing to risk his life, to gain thy favour. Listen, and you shall hear what a different fate has been *mine*; cherish the lesson—blessed be heaven, it comes not too late!"

She signed them to sit beside her on a fragment of rock, and in a low, sad voice, Lona Seaforth began thus to speak:—

"When I was younger than you are now, Taffine Seaforth, people called me Queen of the Western Isles; you see how fading and fleeting is beauty! Ulric, of Staffa, famed for his daring exploits as a fisher and fowler, and surnamed the 'lion-hearted,' wooed me for his bride; there were many who warned me, that if I became Ulric's wife, it would be to seal my own misery for life. His imperious temper, wayward disposition, and haughty spirit, were not fitted to match with mine, they said; for, though I bade him open defiance, as *a lover*, and our quarrels were violent and unceasing; yet, as *a wife*, this would never—never do. But I knew my own heart best—and his, too—all generous and ardent as it was; and I knew, that when I became a wife, it would be the first and sweetest happiness of life to yield gentle and implicit submission to his will. Alas! I was never to be tried—for I was made up of vanity and pride, and I delighted to exercise my power over his affections—and to show to others, how I alone could bend and tame this wild spirit. And yet I loved him better than my life; his footstep was music to my ear; a glance of his dark eyes was sunshine to my soul; and the world has been to me one vast tomb, since those early days I speak of. Ulric's father was a farvese, and had perished, together with his elder son, while pursuing their

hazardous occupation; a *broken rope* had plunged the father into a frightful abyss, and in one short moment all was over, and the mangled corpse was not recovered for many days. Ulric's brother, tempted by an offer of extraordinary remuneration from an amateur, engaged to procure an eagle's egg from a quarter where they were known to have a nest. The cragsman scaled the precipice, and reached the eyrie, but the locality was strange, and the weather hazy; he found himself in startling proximity to the fierce birds, who beat him *down—down—*; and though, when taken up far below, blinded, and so utterly disfigured, that even his poor mother could not recognise her son, he spoke a few words of explanation and comfort, addressed to her, ere he expired. This widowed mother was now dependant on Ulric for support. She had sought her native Staffa with a broken heart, and leaned on this last dear prop for daily sustenance: and yet I—I, who loved him—urged him to risk his precious life,—and for what? For the same fancy, Taffine, that *you* have just expressed,—a wish to possess an eagle's egg, and a desire to test to the utmost my own power over Ulric, and his prowess and undaunted courage. My spirit, too, was aroused by his mother laying her *commands* on him to desist from the perilous venture. I would try which was strongest—love or duty—and as you, love, said to Philip, so said I to Ulric, 'bring me the coveted treasure, and name your own reward!' There was a strange look in his eyes when he heard me doubt his courage, and when I dared him to perform this exploit—for it was known, the most indomitable explorers had left the eagles unmolested—solely from the impossibility of reaching them, during many past trying seasons. But Ulric scaled the rocks—*how*—I never knew—nor, I believe, did he; he brought me the eagle's egg. It was on the night of a festive assembly at our dwelling, that he entered the long, low room. I had been expecting him. I knew not that he had been risking his life that day, and I was smiling, and full of mirth. Ulric was very pale, and grave, and there was a fresh, deep cut across his forehead; however, I determined not to show my concern, as he laid the egg on my knees; for when I looked into his face with a triumphant smile, he returned it with a severe and scornful glance. Ulric never spoke, Taffine; he left St. Kilda's Isle without a word of explanation or rebuke,—no need of words, his eyes spoke too plainly contempt and disgust; he never asked for *his reward*—it was worthless to him—I had proved his courage, felt his power, and lost his love! Taffine, I was scorned and rejected by him who was all the world to me; no contrition, no humility, could avail to win his heart again,—he read my character aright—my unfeeling vanity

and pride. Ulric left the islands with his mother, and they told me he went to sea, but I never saw him more; and, humbled, abased, and shamed to the verge of madness, I have dragged on a wretched existence. And now, Taffline Seaforth, do you persist in requiring this idle fancy to be fulfilled, as the price of your hand? Ah! no—no—I read your penitence in your tears, dear girl!”

“But,” said Philip, with a kind smile, “it does not follow, Miss Lona, that if I am fortunate enough to procure the treasure for which dear Taffline wishes, that I shall feel disposed to copy the conduct of him you have named. I am only too glad, too happy, to run any risk—if risk there be—to prove my devotion and love.”

“Ah, Philip!” cried the weeping girl, “you can only prove it in one way now,” and she placed her hand in his, “by forgetting my folly, and never—never alluding to it again.”

Lona Seaforth, in the meanwhile, had disappeared; and when I heard these details from Philip, he told me with exultation of his approaching happiness, for that Taffline had consented to become his wife immediately.

They were united at St. Kilda’s ancient kirk, the ceremony being performed by the excellent Mr. Seaforth. He brought the “mermaiden bride” away from her native isle, and she endured the inland change with wonderful equanimity.

Miss Danser did not think that Philip, with all his experience, understood the management of children’s maladies half so well as herself; for, when whooping-cough attacked Philip’s little ones, the celebrated cough mixture of St. Kilda’s, “patronised by royalty,” was duly forwarded to Mrs. Bowes, by her anxious aunt,—that worthy lady, on her decease, bequeathing the inestimable recipe to Philip, as a valuable secret, to be carefully handed down to posterity.

I continued to reside with my brother and his wife for many years, with a grateful heart witnessing their unbroken happiness. Taffline used to say, that whenever she felt tempted to indulge caprice, or to betray froward words, the remembrance of aunt Lona’s warning checked and kept in abeyance the unfeminine spirit—for, she added, “there are many other ways of risking the loss of affection, *besides the way of the Eagle’s Nest!*”

SCENES IN SPAIN.

No. III. — THE EMBROIDERED BANNER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

AND where was Soto Mayor while his young and devoted betrothed Mariana lay pining in a loathsome dungeon? Could it be possible, as by some was afterwards affirmed, that, swayed by the impulse of craven fear, he lay crouching in cowardice and trembling, unconscious and uncaring for aught on earth, except the degrading selfishness of personal security from harm? Sorry would any man be to think so basely of human nature, and when we have seen the proud, ambitious youth ready to dare all, even at the risk of losing what on earth he most coveted—the hand of his adored mistress—when called on to stand forth in defence of what he conceived to be his country's rights, was it likely that such a man, when the cherished of his heart, the idol of every fond imagining might have been rescued from despair, misery, and death by one small word by him spoken—is it possible that he would have withheld that talismanic power, and have allowed the young, the beautiful, and good to expire on the public scaffold for his sake, rather than unbind her soft and tender limbs, by offering himself in her stead? No, it is *not* possible—love, courage, every attribute dear to man, shrinks appaled at the contemplation of such grovelling meanness; and assuredly Soto Mayor was not one on whom so damning a stigma could be fixed.

As *I* heard this tale, far otherwise was the fact; deceived, and doubly betrayed by her whom he never doubted was his friend, the impatient cavalier was fain content to seclude himself in the fastnesses of the mountains until the dark suspicion that Elena de Santaguella took care should reach him, was removed from his name. Appreciating the apparent generosity of that beautiful girl, who rather than allow her cousin Mariana to risk even the chance of being involved in the plot, took

upon herself the task and braved the odium of warning her unhappy dupe not to approach the vicinity of Grenada until the suspicions now so currently coupled with his name, had passed away. Of Mariana she spoke not in her letter, but that was but to Soto Mayor's mind another proof of the cautious foresight of his angelic guardian, since she evidently avoided mention of her cousin for reasons already explained, and the confiding lover found solace in that very silence, since he was convinced that had his betrothed been otherwise than well, he must have been apprised of it by word or signet.

Thus passed the weary hours of his monotonous banishment. He dared not wander from the neighbouring recesses, amid the rocks and mountains, for fear of missing the messenger whom he so impatiently and with so much anxiety awaited; to descend to the plain and enter the town he was taught to regard as madness; certain was he that the moment the hour arrived when his loathed captivity could be shaken off, he would be cheerfully summoned from his irksome hiding-place.

But far different were the meditations of the poor victim immured in the fastnesses of a gloomy prison. Cast into a loathsome cell, where the heavenly light was never known to shed his glorious beams; there subjected to all that art or cruelty could devise, to wring from that young creature the secret which she resolved never to reveal; tortured by the most fervent asservations of promised pardon, yet inspired by the picture of liberty which, in contrast to an ignominious death, her persecutors were for ever dinning in her ears,—still that beautiful maiden, strong in conscious rectitude and undiminished love, boldly dared the craftiest of the wretches who surrounded her, striving to wring from her constant and devoted heart the word which would have given her lover to the scaffold.

* * * * *

It was mid-day: the sun, in all his magnificence, cast his beams around each gilded minaret of the Moorish palace. Birds of every hue spread forth their variegated plumage as they sportively played round the flashing fountain in the court. It was a day so mild, so serenely beautiful, that the most ascetic and discontented among mankind, could not have refused acknowledging the irresistible power which the unparalleled goodness of God had so bountifully poured forth to gladden the hearts of his creatures.

Yet, amid the thousands that crowded the busy streets of Grenada, and the many more otherwise occupied, partaking of the genial influence of the day, could it be possible that one, even one hosom in that proud city, could have beat so coldly as utterly to disregard the blessing unreservedly showered upon

all? Is it indeed possible? Ah, wherefore ask the question? Look around among the young and happy, and the thoughtless, who readily grasp at pleasure as it comes—nor ask nor heed they for what period it may last—never contemplating that aught can rise to mar the felicity of the hour. Strange infatuation, that such an erroneous supposition should find place in any man's breast, when, let him turn which way he will, he cannot fail to encounter misery, and grief, and all the many ills that human life is heir to. Still, the day-charm of youth glides gaily on; and it is not until the fragile bark, by the adverse current of life's stream, is eventually driven against one or other of the many shoals that lie around, that we finally discover no exception is likely to be made in our favour more than in that of others.

As I have already said, it was a beautiful day, and little did the many whose bright eyes joyously glanced from the shaded balconies on the variegated groups beneath, imagine that, while all seemed happiness around, there was *one* being—and by far the loveliest of any—but a few yards from where they stood, pining out her eyes in solitude and darkness.

The dungeon wherein Mariana de Peineda was entombed, was far below the surface of the earth. Within that dark, dreary vault, the bright beams of day had never cast even one of his faintest rays, to cheer the heart of the wretched captive. Darkness there reigned supreme, save when the flickering light from some lurid torch was made to throw its ruddy glare upon the walls, giving to sight the various instruments of torture strewn around, which but to acknowledge once existed, is to stamp the accursed inventors of such cruelties with the attributes of fiends.

In this cold, dark chamber, in solitude and misery unspeakable, lay the young and tenderly nurtured Mariana, her couch a disgusting mass of mouldering straw. But what were the discomforts of her personal position compared to the agony of her mind? The wretchedness that poor girl suffered must have exceeded all the bodily torture ingenuity could invent; but as the sequel proves, neither promises nor threats—no, not even the fear of a painful and ignominious death, could turn her from her generous purpose of secreting in her own bosom the knowledge of the home of her beloved.

It might have been mid-day, or the dark hour of night, for all poor Mariana knew to the contrary, when the key was heard turning in the lock of her prison door. The bolts were withdrawn, and by the light carried by an attendant, she observed several figures enter the apartment.

Noiselessly, and as by stealth, one by one, the dark forms

choking up the passage glided in silence across the threshold of the dungeon, and arranged themselves around the prostrate form of their victim. Many days had now elapsed since Mariana had been immured within those detested walls; but though her soul still glowed with all the fond devotion of woman's first and only love for the one adored object which to her mind appeared the very ideal of perfection, and although for no instant did her mind revert to the possibility of obtaining release from her sufferings at the price so frequently demanded, yet would she have been far more than woman, had not the slender frame, the fragile form, and delicately nurtured figure, sunk under the awful excitement which the gentle girl had been compelled to undergo—more, far more from mental agony, than from the intense bodily suffering she had already experienced.

Weak and attenuated, the beautiful creature had scarce strength to raise herself from the revolting bed of filth, where, from sheer exhaustion, and the almost absence of the necessities of life, she had cast herself down, fondly hoping that the hour had arrived which was to end her trials upon earth. But so blessed a consummation was far from near; the bitter dregs yet remained untasted in the cup, and it was decreed that they should be drained to the last drop.

"Mariana de Peineda," commenced a hollow, discordant voice, "arise, and reply to the questions which in our mercy we offer for your consideration. Obstinacy such as yours, if persevered in, must meet its just award—a terrible, an ignominious end: yet wherefore should such happen? With you it rests, by one word, instantly to dispel the appalling symbols of death, and dissipate for ever the scene by which you are surrounded, and again shall you be received into the bosom of that family whom, through your pertinacious obstinacy, you are rendering wretched indeed. Utter but the one word required, and instantly shall all this dread paraphernalia pass away; as by magic, the dark ceiling of the vault shall be exchanged for the bright canopy of heaven; the strange, forbidding features which now glare frightfully around your loathsome couch, shall be succeeded by the fond, anxious faces of those by whom so justly you are loved. Picture to yourself the happiness, the enthusiastic expressions of delight, the gush of pure, unalloyed affection which will greet your return to the arms of friends whom by your voluntary absence, you are rendering most miserable. But why should I pursue this theme? Neither my colleagues nor myself revel in anticipation of scenes of blood and horror sufficient to stagnate the warm blood now flowing in our veins. Yet what course can be pursued? what demand

will be made by a justly incensed country, when your crime is bruited abroad, and your abhorred and traitorous designs exposed?"

"Cease, oh cease your persecutions, I implore you," cried the almost distracted girl. "What crime have I committed? what unjust thought even have I ever harboured, which can justify any one in exposing me to the humiliating misery I now endure?"

"It is not on you, Mariana," interrupted Don Jose Martinez, "it is not on you that we would fain visit the punishment which must be inflicted as the reward of the rebellious act: far otherwise is our wish, and as proof of our sincerity, and as a guarantee for the earnestness of our professions, we have now descended to this vault, offering to restore you on the instant to peace and happiness, light and life, if——"

"If what?" almost fiercely demanded their suffering victim, roused to a momentary exhibition of strength, which could but dazzle for the instant, to fade almost instantly away.

"What is it you demand of me?" she again exclaimed. "What return can it be in the power of a wretched victim like myself to offer for the blessings you propose?"

"The name of him for whom you worked the rebel Banner," slowly drawled out Ybanez.

"What mean you by rebel?" instantly rejoined their victim. "I deny the word—I spurn the charge—and cast it back indignantly to those who dare accuse me!"

"Nay, lady," chimed in the rough voice of one of the assembled monsters; "we will not dispute about a term, nor argue with La Senorita Mariana Peiuada on so knotty and momentous a point. Let it suffice that we hold *our* opinion on this matter, while you entertain your own. Still, be the appellation correct or not, the issue will be found the same: and therefore is it," continued this brute in human form, "that, the award having gone forth, either you as the participator, or the person for whom the Banner was embroidered as instigator of the act, must be prepared to meet the consequence of the deed."

"Yet bethink thee, lady," observed Don Juan Ascentio, by far the most humane of that remorseless group, "bethink thee that in all common justice, he who planned the act, and who, by aid of specious argument and appeal to the kinder though perhaps weaker feelings of woman, inculpated another, he it most assuredly is who should bear the brunt of the developement of his crime, and not the passive instrument by whose aid he hoped to attain his end, while keeping afar off from danger, he urged on the desperate work of which hereafter he expected to derive the benefit."

"You utter words inapplicable to the case," returned Mariana, on whose gentle mind the less savage tone of Don Juan's voice, when compared with those of his colleagues, sensibly made its due impression; "you know not of whom nor of what you speak."

"Nay, then," exclaimed the wily Corregidor, "if, Mariana, you will deign to lighten us on this matter, peradventure we may find the case, in all its bearings, less criminal than at present it appears."

"You say we know not of whom we speak, lady," quietly observed Don Juan.

"Neither do you," replied the persecuted girl. "Could you but be aware of ——" but then the unbroken sentence was abruptly broken, for despite of her anxiety to vindicate the fame of her beloved, the anxious, piercing countenances around her, eagerly denoting greedy expectation, acted as a ready check upon the spontaneous outburst of generous feeling, which, had it been allowed to find utterance, would in all probability have delivered her lover to the block, and possibly without bettering her own condition, beyond the permission of quitting the world with him on whom she doated with all the fervour of a woman's love.

For a time, the conclave waited for a continuance of the declaration which they had already pictured to themselves would put them in possession of all they most cared to become acquainted with. But as the continued silence of the fair prisoner denoted her resolution to remain silent, Don Antonio Ybanez once more essayed to speak, in the hope of effecting his object.

"Picture not to yourself," he recommenced, "that by human aid deliverance can reach you here: though of necessity your absence is no secret from your friends, still, they know not where you are. Our plans were so matured at the period of your arrest, that none were made cognizant of our presence save those who, for good and sufficient reasons, dare not utter on the subject. It is true, the city is aware that some state criminal has been detected in the very commission of treason, and consequently must meet the doom by law prescribed: but none can guess the victim. Therefore is it that for the last time I am most desirous of impressing on your mind the wickedness and folly of persisting in your obstinate resolve. One word, and you shall be restored to your friends with so plausible an account of your absence, that none can ever surmise that the true story yet remains untold: the comparatively innocent will be released, and the guilty, as is their just reward, shall be left to suffer in your stead. For the last time, Mari-

ana de Peineda, for whom was the Embroidered Banner worked?"

"What if I refuse to declare?" demanded in reply the dauntless heroine.

"What if you refuse to declare?" said her tormentor, slowly repeating the exact words she had uttered.

"Yes," replied the anxious girl, her features pale as though the gallant spirit had already left its beauteous frame—"what fate will your cruelty reserve to wreak on a weak and friendless woman, should she refuse to give the information you require? Again I ask what will be her fate?"

"Death!" muttered the iron-visaged, blood-thirsty Ybanez—"a long, a cruel, and a painful death—the death of a malefactor on the felon's scaffold—the gaze and scoff of thousands—the object of detestation while living, the theme of universal obloquy and execration when dead."

"And such must be the fate of him whom you wish me to denounce?" almost shrieked the horror-stricken prisoner.

"Or *yours*, should you persevere in your wilful and pertinacious silence," was the reply.

"Then be it *mine*, at once," exclaimed Mariana, when the worst that could befall her was made known. "Let that too dreadful suffering be mine, rather than his. From this hour I hold no further converse with you. Cold, bloody, and remorseless as you are, seek not to persecute me further. If you determine that in a brief period I must end my days upon the scaffold, let your thirst for torture be restrained, until I am brought forth to suffer an ignominious end; but until that hour arrives, leave me to myself. Behold," she exclaimed—pointing to the dungeon door—"I care not for your presence here. Leave me to my misery. Begone!"

The scowling instruments of oppression turned their lowering brows away, and not daring to reply or utter words in justification of further persecution, by remaining in despite of the poor girl's commands, with slow steps and scowling visage, each of the cold-blooded tyrants turned towards the passage, when, having stooped under the low archway, forming a portion of the portal at the narrow entrance, and guided by the uncertain glare of the torch, they wended their way towards the blessed light of day, mentally rejoicing at having quitted the horrible abode of wretchedness and filth.

As the last examiner passed the threshold, the rusty bolts were forced into their sockets—the huge key revolved in the locks of the prison door, and the over-wrought energies of the pure and innocent victim, taxed beyond the power of nature to support, the exhausted frame of Mariana de Peineda sank upon the revolting pallet, insensible alike to present misery and pain.

CHAPTER V.

So publicly was the engagement between Soto Mayor and Mariana Peineda bruited about, as to render it impossible for the former to escape suspicion when his affianced bride was detected in the act of weaving together those golden threads which, when completed, portrayed in brilliant colours the Banner of rebellion; and consequently but a brief period elapsed after poor Mariana's incarceration, ere the *Corregidor*, with the full sanction of his colleagues, dispatched his emissaries to effect the capture of her betrothed.

The foresight of Elena de Santaguella, as already shown, fully anticipating the movement as the inevitable result of her cousin's detection, had already forestalled the danger by forwarding to Soto Mayor, while from Granada, such earnest entreaties for continuing his absence, as produced immediate compliance with her request—the more readily, as he viewed in the earnestness of her solicitations an irrefragable proof of regard for himself, as also an evident desire to shield from harm one whom, she was well aware, was loved by her cousin as devotedly as woman's affection can be lavished on the object of her choice.

From Elena de Santaguella, therefore, was it that Soto Mayor received with confidence the unwelcome intelligence that strong suspicion was attached to him as having aided, and indeed being then engaged in organising, those bands of Guerrillas by whose dauntless intrepidity it was expected attempts would ere long be made for overthrowing the then existing government.

No intelligence was conveyed to him regarding the discovery of the Banner, and consequently the fate of Mariana remained unknown to her lover, who, fondly believing his betrothed was safe and protected amid the large circle of her friends, could not too deeply appreciate the generous daring of her who, rather than suffer her cousin to incur risk, boldly adopted measures for insuring liberty to himself, and—as he sanguinely hoped—happiness ere long to both.

Not the shadow of a doubt as to Elena's sincerity crossed his mind; and fervently did he invoke blessings on the generous woman, whom he regarded, in this his hour of peril, as a true and tried friend indeed.

Carefully avoiding contact with any one, and not daring to approach the city, the only information Soto Mayor could gather, was through the brief epistles he received, together with his food, both of which were deposited, by an assent of Elena's, in a lone and almost inaccessible chasm, buried amid the hills

in the neighbourhood of Santa Fè; to which spot he was directed to repair at a certain hour; yet strenuously warned, on no consideration whatever, to utter questions, or retard the return of the bearer.

To these conditions the wanderer rigidly adhered; and, secure in the good faith of her who imposed the restrictions, he waited with what patience he could command for the period of emancipation from his banishment.

Thus far the machinations of the reckless plotter prospered; and could she but continue Soto Mayor in ignorance of Mariana's danger until human interference in her behalf would prove unavailing, she doubted not but time, coupled with the influence of her acknowledged personal attractions, together with untiring devotion to his every wish, would eventually wean his thoughts from the contemplation of the terrible past, and lead him to seek future consolation and comfort in the ever demonstrated affection of the being so devoted to him as herself.

Having discovered so valuable and unlooked-for an auxiliary as Elena de Santaguella proved herself, Don Antonio Ybanez resolved on turning his new coadjutor to further advantage, beyond the attainment of the benefit he expected to reap through the betrayal of her unhappy cousin; and shrewdly imagining that one so intimately acquainted with the secrets of the intended bride must possess some knowledge regarding her betrothed, he hesitated not in holding forth in vivid colours every description of brilliant reward, which his cunning could suggest as likely to influence the actions of a bold and unprincipled woman, hoping thereby ultimately to entangle Soto Mayor himself within his meshes.

Seeming compliance with the *Corregidor's* desire was absolutely necessary to her own safety, and while inveigling the magistrate into the belief that to the uttermost of her ability she was accelerating his views, the double traitress was placed in a position to apprise the denounced so correctly, regarding each contemplated movement of his enemies, as effectually enabled him to baffle their well-concerted efforts for accomplishing his capture.

Acknowledgement to any one, of the source from whence the Chief Magistrate obtained his information, save as regarded his two colleagues, formed no part of the *Corregidor's* intention, and therefore was it that Elena de Santaguella continued to be received by the afflicted family of Mariana as a relation who had ever shown herself as the affectionate and devoted ally of her unhappy cousin.

Access to the prisoner was forbidden by the authorities, with the exception of admission into the building of any whom the

wretched girl herself might express a desire to see. But Mariana, anxious as the unhappy victim naturally was again to behold the countenances of those she loved, courageously denied herself the gratification so ardently coveted, knowing, as she well did, that a wish to that effect uttered by her was tantamount to involving those named in similar danger with herself.

Little cared the *Corregidor* or his colleagues to probe the motive which could have actuated their informer to betray the loved companion of her childhood, and the chosen friend of her bosom ; it was enough for them to possess the information which had proved so conducive to their wishes ; and as Soto Mayor still evaded their grasp, and infuriated at receiving day after day further confirmation of the rumoured outbreak, they finally resolved to bring the punishment of their victim to a speedy and an awful close.

* * * * *

Three days more passed away, and the drear solitude and silence of Mariana's dungeon had been broken upon only by the heart-rending sighs of the wretched prisoner, and the periodical entrance of the ferocious-looking jailor, who, placing before her the scanty meal, barely sufficient to preserve existence, invariably departed without a word in reply to the many questions advanced by the helpless girl.

As far as Mariana could conjecture, it was now again about the period for the return of the keeper ; neither was she mistaken, for on unbolting the door of the narrow cell, the guardian of that loathsome dungeon intimated, more by signs than words, she was to follow whither he might lead.

To her, poor captive, any change at the moment appeared advantageous. Escape from the disgusting vault, where for so many days she had been immured, to behold once more the glorious beams of day, and inhale the pure air of heaven, was, in her estimation, an exchange incomparably welcome, even though the coming hour brought with it agony, aye, even death itself.

Weak and emaciated, she drew her tottering steps along the damp and slimy pavement, unheeding to what place she was being led ; but in the hope, that be her destination where it may, the awful abode she had just quitted might never receive her again as its inmate, while life animated her frame ; and the mentally breathed prayer of the deserted girl was destined, in brief space, to be complied with.

Ushered into a long, gloomy chamber, the extremity of which was undiscernable in the distance, Mariana beheld, by the dim

light of a few tapers, shedding their sickly glimmer on the scene, the ruthless countenances of her former interrogators.

On the furrowed visages of those stern judges, mercy had left no trace, if indeed so benign an attribute ever held even transient dominion in their bosoms.

Slowly and painfully the doomed girl moved towards the table near where the Corregidor and his co-patriots were seated, and on which was placed, as though in mockery of contrast to the sombre hue around, the glittering folds of the ill-omened banner.

"Mariana Peineda," commenced Don Antonio Ybanez, breaking the awful silence in that chamber of condemnation, "again we offer you the choice of liberty and life, if, in conformity with our commands, you disclose the name of him for whom you wove the insignia displayed on this accursed Banner," and pointing to the gorgeously emblazoned standard, he fixed his cold, grey eyes, on the death-like countenance of his prisoner.

"Time, aye, and more, much more than sufficient time," exclaimed the harsh voice of Don Juan Acentio, "has been granted by the mercy of those before whom you now stand, to have enabled you well to ponder on the fearful result which must inevitably occur, should you continue perseverance in your fruitless and unavailing obstinacy. Well is it known to us for whose rebellious hand this tawdry symbol of revolt was worked, but from *your* lips must we hear the confirmation of our intelligence pronounced; a confirmation instantly procuring in your favour immediate liberation, and pardon for your crime. If, on the other hand, you pertinaciously determine on maintaining silence, you will share the doom of him, who, ere this day's sun shall sink in the west, will assuredly be numbered among those who *once* were, but who are now no more. Mariana Peineda," continued her inexorable judge, "again I say—decide."

"Our Lady forbid!" exclaimed the beautiful sufferer, extending her clasped hands towards the stone-hearted triumvirate. "Surely *one* life is sufficient to appease your bitter wrath; therefore on me let your vengeance be wreaked,—on *me*, a weak, defenceless woman, and thus let your vindictive persecution be appeased. But," she continued, drawing her faultless figure to its full height, and appearing even more lovely in that her hour of agonizing trial, than when basking in the sunshine of her bygone days, "I give no credence to your words; he, at whose destruction you aim, is far removed from your tyrannical power, and thanks be to the holy Virgin, unconscious of the degradation you have subjected me to; I repeat, I give no credence to your tale. He for whom the ill-fated Banner was

woven, is at this moment free, aye, free in person as in soul. Never shall he experience the humiliation of finding *his* limbs manacled by *your* chains. Never will he find a resting place within these accursed walls. Full well I know *my* doom is fixed, and less than useless would all appeals for mercy prove, before this cruel, unrelenting tribunal; but here, on the very brink of that futurity, from whence none who enter ever can return, I solemnly prophesy, that as certain as inevitably will come to pass, that I suffer a sure but painful death, so sure will retribution, terrible and unexpected, be visited on the heads of each and all of those who participate in furthering my destruction. An hour will come, a period is now marked in the dark book of fate, at which each accessory to my murder shall reap an horrible, an agonising award, in satisfaction for the cold-blooded sacrifice you now premeditate.

"Mark well my words," exclaimed the excited captive, assuming on the instant that proud dignity of bearing which well attested the innate consciousness of her immeasurable superiority of soul above the cowardly hearts, now quailing in the bosoms of her blood-thirsty executioners; "mark well my words," she continued, her bright eyes flashing with a brilliancy almost superhuman. "Remember my prophecy when I am no more; reflect on what I now utter, when you repose in fancied security amid those who are dear to you in life,—at the festive board, surrounded by all that can enchain the senses,—in the dark hour of night,—in the apparent safety of broad day,—at home, and abroad,—at all times, and in all places; remember, there is a death, a violent, sure and painful death, to which *my* end will appear but as the moment preceding an infant's calm repose, awaiting one and all concerned in this dread tragedy. Not one—no, not one, shall escape, who has been instrumental in bringing a daughter of the noble house who owns me to an ignominious end. And now, for the last time, I repeat—beware!"

"Enough of this," observed Don Jose Martinez, raising his voice, glad of any pretext for endeavouring to shake off an undefined sensation of awe creeping over him, and which he perceived was rapidly enchainning the mental faculties of his colleagues; "these empty prognostications of future evil weigh not with us. We heed not the imbecile ravings of an infatuated woman, bent, even at the sacrifice of herself, to shield from justice the dastardly instigator of her crime. Yet are we still desirous of sparing one of Grenada's daughters from the shame of public exposure, and the agony of an ignominious death. We seek not your life, our sole motive is the preservation of the state; but if in obduracy you persist refusing utterance of the name

of him whom we well know as the chief criminal in the treasonable act for which you are here arraigned, then may the saints look down with pity on you from above, since mercy cannot be extended to such delinquency as yours on earth."

"Mariana Peineda," slowly, and with scarce distinguishable utterance, continued Don Antonio Ybanez, "my colleague has justly observed, how puerile must all vain and passionate threats appear, when uttered in exculpation of your crime; neither can it avail in extenuation of punishment, which, when decreed, will be approved of by all loyal subjects, and which, if carried into execution, must be attributed solely to your insane perseverance in an erroneous idea of honour. Again, and for the last time, I repeat, Soto Mayor is in our power; say, then, Mariana Peineda, was it not for your allied husband, that fatal silk was worked?"

The brave, beautiful girl gazed at her interrogator with a dignified expression of unmitigated contempt, and folding her exquisitely-moulded arms across a heart as replete with generous and intrepid feeling as ever throbbed in woman's breast, gazed steadily and without emotion on her oppressor, but replied not by word or sign.

A few seconds of deep silence interposed, when the Corregidor, after a brief but inaudible consultation with his subordinates, exclaimed, in a tone of voice, tremulous with dread at what the consequence *might* prove, resulting from the fiat he was about to pronounce:

"You have refused our clemency, Mariana Peineda, you have rejected the mercy so leniently vouchsafed you, leaving nothing now for me to utter beyond the reluctant, though, alas! imperative command that you—die!"

* * * * *

The destruction or release of the victim in no degree rested on her acquiescence with the disclosure demanded; for already had her fate been sealed by the unbending resolve of her judges; and, ere the option was afforded of betraying her betrothed, orders had been issued for the erection of the scaffold, and all the dread paraphernalia of death was arrayed in the Piazza, some hours previous to the victim receiving sentence.

But a few minutes intervened between the interview recorded, ere the unhappy girl—scarcely conscious of what was passing around—found herself placed in the centre of a long procession, wending its slow progress towards the spot whereon it was destined all her earthly sufferings were to cease.

It was mid-day when the deep voices of the priests—broken only by the loud tolling of the funeral bell, chanting the death dirge—struck to the hearts of the thousands assembled to

witness a spectacle, the full accomplishment of which few among the multitude believed the authorities would show sufficient temerity to carry into effect.

Conciliatory measures at that period would have done most towards favouring the cause the Corregidor and his colleagues espoused, than by enforcing to the uttermost of their ability those sanguinary measures by which they trusted to strike terror, and intimidate the opposing party; but the die was cast. In their bigotted hatred towards all opposed to their political views, they passed the rubicon, which never could be re-trod; and to recede from their openly avowed resolve of exterminating all who opposed the wishes of the government, was now rendered impossible.

Openly had they denounced a member of one of the noblest families in Spain; and strange as it may appear, they had hitherto been permitted to portray their hatred towards their opponents through the persecution of one of the purest and most lovely women their country could claim as a daughter.

It was a period, however, when no man cared to utter aloud his real sentiments on public matters: all was doubt and suspicion; and though the contracted brow and clenched hands of many a gallant *caballero* bore evidence to the feelings raging within his bosom, none dared espouse the cause of the fair girl then approaching, since no man could calculate on aid from among the densely crowded mass of human beings then present.

Many there were who, at all risk, would have rushed forth and attempted the rescue of one so beautiful, and beloved by those who knew her, had a shadow of success in the attempt presented itself; but, as before stated, none dare openly avow his detestation of the coming butchery, and consequently the unhappy Mariana ascended the scaffold without one hand being stretched forth in her behalf,—while, had the sentiments pervading the bosoms of nearly every witness of the scene been known to each other, the weak, though still dauntless woman, then on the brink of eternity, would have instantaneously been rescued from her peril; and the cowardly oppressors effectually rendered incapable of committing further atrocity and crime.

But such was not to be. An oppressive silence pervaded all within the square, not a murmur escaped the crowd: it seemed as though each living being was suddenly converted into stone; all were awe-struck; all motionless. And without one effort being made in behalf of a creature so formed to love and to adore, the Banner was reduced to ashes on the scaffold; the iron collar encircled one of the fairest necks nature ever vouchsafed to woman; and, amid the gaze and horror of thousands,

the ruffianly executioner performed his disgusting task, and the disfigured corpse was all that remained of the once envied and beautiful Mariana.

Not an hour passed, when, if returning to the spot, all that had occurred might have been registered as a fearful dream. No trace of the foul murder remained; the countless multitude had disappeared, the awe-inspiring scaffold, with its lugubrious draperies, had vanished, the buzz of human beings was unheard, not a loiterer occupied the Plaza, save one man, so effectually enveloped within the ample folds of his dark cloak, as to preclude the possibility of recognition; and he appeared carefully, and by stealth, occupied in collecting what remained of the ashes of the "Embroidered Banner."

* * * * *

Numerous were the surmises which stole across the minds of those who beheld the awful spectacle which that day's sun shone upon, regarding the cause of Soto Mayor's unaccountable absence, for none who knew the circumstances of his betrothed hesitated for one moment in arriving at the conclusion, that for him had the now defaced Banner been intended. Those best acquainted with his character felt convinced that *his* was not the coward spirit to avert danger to himself, by willingly permitting the noble spirit just departed to suffer in his stead. All was mystery and conjecture, but the cause which the Corregidor and his partizans hoped to crush by their ill-timed severity, rose, hydra-headed, from poor Mariana's tomb.

Disgust and deep-rooted thirst for vengeance were engendered in the minds of hundreds who beheld the awful punishment awarded for what, in their estimation, appeared so light and trivial an offence.

Few men existed in all Grenada, who did not—now, when too late—curse their own pusillanimous apathy in not having effected one struggle to save from an ignominious end her, whose unopposed death cast a blighting and never to be effaced stigma upon the once boasted appropriation by their country, of a Spaniard's acknowledged claim to chivalry, and unswerving devotion in a woman's cause.

Many were the heavy hearts and sorrowing countenances throughout Grenada on the night of the memorable day recorded; but light would have appeared the accumulation of their manifold regrets when compared to the deep and never-ceasing anguish lacerating the bosom of the betrayer.

Again and again had the wretched girl determined to throw herself at the feet of her lost cousin's parents, and, confessing her unparalleled baseness, humbly and in deep contrition implore pardon for her sin. But a moment's consideration of the

inutility of such abject confession roused up the proud spirit within her, and, not daring to look back on the heinousness of the crime she had committed, she resolved boldly and without compunction to hesitate at nothing, however atrocious the means employed, so that the all-engrossing object constantly in view be finally achieved.

The main obstacle to the accomplishment of Elena de Santaguella's object was now overcome. Her formidable rival was removed; Soto Mayor was away, and unapprised of Mariana's death; her treachery was unsuspected. But the most trying portion of the self-imposed task yet remained unaccomplished; and how to break the intelligence of her cousin's fate to one so devoted required much subtlety and resolution to determine. But consideration on that point might have been spared, since it was not destined that through her instrumentality the deceived wanderer was to become acquainted with the appalling extent of his bereavement.

As day succeeded day, and Soto Mayor found himself unmolested in his mountain retreat, the irksomeness of his position became unbearable, and, attributing the close incognito to which Elena de Santaguella had enforced him as arising more from timidity on her part than from the probability of danger accruing to himself, he resolved no longer to continue the silence she had imposed, but determined to accost the messenger when next he approached his lurking-place with food. This was easily effected, and, though the man had been carefully tutored to his task, in case of untoward circumstances occurring, and though no hint of Mariana's fate escaped his lips, still there was something in the contradictory replies and hesitating manner that failed not in arousing an undefined feeling of approaching evil in the breast of his listener.

Who has not experienced that inexplicable sensation, acting as the prelude to hitherto unexpected sorrow? A dark shadow of anticipation of danger, coming from we know not where, and emanating from we know not whom. One of these mysteries, impossible to fathom, yet still a forewarning, which occasionally *will* cross the mind, though from what cause needless to conjecture.

Such was the impulse swaying Soto Mayor's interview with Elena's messenger, together with a boding of misfortune to him as strange as unaccountable, which urged him to hurry with all speed to Grenada, and satisfy himself of the welfare of her he loved better, aye, immeasurably better, than he prized his own existence.

Once having entertained a dread of impending calamity, numerous circumstances, which previously passed without challenge,

now rose conflictingly in his thoughts. For the first time it appeared strange that not one line had he received from Mariana during his exile, while scarce twenty-four hours were permitted to elapse without a missive from Elena reaching his hands; and the more he pondered on the circumstance, the more perplexed was he at the omission not having crossed his mind since when, in the first instance, the danger of a correspondence with her was pointed out, and which, if detected, would inevitably entail misery on his affianced bride, who naturally being an object of suspicion, would indisputably be strictly watched.

Worn and harassed with the fatigue of his long journey, Soto Mayor reached the vicinity of the city by daylight; but, not daring to enter any habitation, for fear of being recognized, he was content to seek a temporary hiding-place in the adjoining valley, where, amid the thick shelter of the dark-leaved olive-trees and clustering vines, he hoped to find repose and safety until the obscurity of night might favour his appearing at the mansion of Mariana's parents.

Four days had now elapsed since the execution. Meanwhile, at the earnest entreaties of her family, the body of the poor girl had been restored to her friends, with the strict injunction from the authorities that the funeral should be conducted with all imaginable privacy, the Corregidor wisely dreading a public procession might act but as a torch to the mine which they now discovered was prepared to burst forth at any moment, and probably would engulf themselves amid the general destruction of their party.

The night was dark and piercing cold; the rain plashed with a dull, comfortless sound on the uneven and deserted pavement; not a star was visible in the firmament, while the ill-lighted lamps irregularly placed at the corners of the streets, maintained but a brief, unequal conflict with the gusts of wind which found ready access through their shattered frames.

It was midnight when Soto Mayor, his garments saturated with wet, and soiled with travel, approached the well-known building. His eyes gazed piercingly towards the casement of the apartment in which he knew Mariana was accustomed to devote her time to the accomplishment of the task he had allotted her. His hair and beard were dishevelled and unshorn; deep anxiety was depicted in every lineament of his handsome countenance; and, as he crept stealthily along, he ever and anon paused, as the dreadful apprehension of some withering and overwhelming calamity almost drove back the warm current of the life-blood from his heart. Rallying, however, from the fearful sensation, which hovered as a dark pall over all his hopes, he hurriedly passed on, and the next instant his form was lost amid

the pillars of the colonnade of the palacio towards which his steps were directed.

To force back the massive iron gates,—to cross the patio, and ascend the broad staircase, occupied less time than is necessarily expended to record. He reached the door of the magnificent saloon where the family were accustomed to assemble; his hand was on the lock, and, nerving himself to the task, with an unconscious violence, he thrust open the portal, and entered the apartment.

Impossible to depict at that moment were Soto Mayor's feelings. He gazed as though entranced from one to another of the numerous occupants of that spacious hall, apparently seeking for explanation of the scene before him; but not a syllable could he utter; his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; his eyes projected fearfully from their sockets; his hands were clenched with intense agony, and he stood rooted to the spot, viewing all around, yet seemingly recognizing no one. The dull stare of his glassy eye embraced the whole pageant in one fixed gaze, and yet comprehensive of nothing. Remaining in the same attitude he assumed when on his entrance, the whole appeared to him but as one of those hideous chimeras that oftentimes haunt the pillow of a doomed and condemned wretch.

The walls and ceiling were enshrouded and hung with heavy, broad folds of black, while deep festoons of the same funereal hue, of velvet, were gathered round the cornices of the apartment. The few lights distributed about added to the awful solemnity of the scene, aided by the dark drapery, concealing every article with its dismal cloak.

There were about forty persons, of both sexes, seated in the apartment. All were members of the same family, and each clad in the dismal habiliments of woe. Not a syllable was uttered; the deepest silence reigned around; but at the sudden and violent entrance of the intruder every face was turned towards the portal, and, as the lineaments of the uninvited visitor became familiar to their vision, each brow angrily contracted, and the compressed lips and haughty gaze bespoke Soto Mayor anything but a welcome guest.

Striving to break the spell so fearfully cast around him, the proscribed rebel, regaining his powers of utterance, exclaimed, "In the name of the blessed saints, I beseech you, explain the meaning of this dreadful scene!"

"Soto Mayor," replied a voice nearly choked with grief, "why ask the cause of that which too well you know? Come you here to revel in the misery you have accomplished, the agony you have engendered in the breasts of all present? or

to gloat over the result of your despicable cowardice? Why were you not here when by one word you might have saved a life ten thousand times more precious than the despicable, dishonoured existence which your trembling heart and craven fear of death forbade a manly sentiment or a single spark of honour to approach? Why come you here?" continued the speaker, rising from his chair, and pointing his finger towards him whom he addressed. "Speak, dastard, speak!" But, obtaining no reply, the exasperated noble continued, his anger momentarily rising, "Why should we hesitate to remove from the earth one who has voluntarily cast himself into our power, and whose mere existence is a blot and a damning disgrace to all mankind? Why should we spare you?" shouted Mariana's father, in a paroxysm of unbridled rage, "but to denounce you—to ensure for your contemptible body a death more painful, more lingering, and more humiliating, than was hers whom you have so atrociously destroyed."

"By the Holy Virgin," almost shrieked the intruder, "again I entreat, again I implore you, tell me what all this fearful decoration aims at?"

"Why were you not here four days since?" responded in slow and hollow tones his accuser. "Why came you not to offer your less than despicable self to save your betrayed victim?"

"As I hope for salvation hereafter," almost inaudibly was the reply, "I know not what you mean!"

"Again," repeated the bereaved parent, "once more I demand, why were you not here when all expected your presence?"

"I was detained," eagerly replied Soto Mayor, his faculties in some degree recovering their accustomed acuteness, "and desired to remain absent from Grenada, by your own commands."

"By mine?" shouted the now infuriated noble.

"By *yours*—by all your kindred," was the response.

"As certain as that I trust in the Mother of God to aid me in my dying hour," vociferated Don Raymond Peineda, "so certain shall your foul blood be poured forth to the uttermost drop, to aid in this night's awful obsequies, should you dare to mock those now assembled on this our awful duty."

"I mock you not," instantly replied Soto Mayor; the earnestness of his gesture plainly showing his innocence of the imputed insult. "Have I not for one long month been hidden in the mountains near Santa Fé, to avoid a danger which your whole family declared to exist? Did I not daily receive written directions to remain in seclusion?" he added, drawing forth various scraps of paper from his sash, "until further suspense was worse to endure than to brave the reality of the evil itself? Am I not here in spite of all your wishes to the contrary, as

proved by these instructions I now hold; and by this one, in particular, which reached me not twenty-four hours since?"

"Soto Mayor has been deceived," boldly exclaimed the unhappy mother of poor Mariana; "some deep laid scheme of treachery has been at work; for never can I credit the possibility of such atrocity existing, as that laid to the charge of him, whom, I am confident, loved my adored child beyond anything else the whole world could offer him."

"You do me but justice, señora," rapidly replied Soto Mayor, "but to me all yet remains unexplained. But where is Mariana," he added, casting his gaze rapidly round the room; "where is my promised bride?"

Not a syllable escaped any of that mournful group in reply: from one to all, the questioner turned his anxious gaze, but each, with averted countenance, remained in silence.

It was evident to those assembled, that Soto Mayor's astonishment and expression of undefined fear, could not be feigned; his countenance—his every gesture betokened evidence of an all-absorbing anxiety, that no deceptive attempt could have achieved.

Avoiding reply to the question asked, the father of the murdered girl, turning towards his assembled kinsmen, in a slow and solemn tone, addressed them. "Señors," he commenced, "evident as it must appear to all present, as also it is manifest to myself, some most diabolical plot, yet to be discovered, has been arranged, and too successfully carried into effect, through the combinations of our enemies, by whose machinations Soto Mayor has remained in ignorance of the horrible catastrophe which, alas! he must now learn. May the Holy Virgin support him through the ordeal; and truly do we all need her aid in this, our hour of unspeakable affliction. But, my friends, be it remembered, we have another—aye, and a sacred duty to perform exclusive of solemnising those rites we are now met to witness; and it is through the assistance to be gained by the papers before us, that we may hope to hurl upon the heads of our oppressors the sure, unfailing vigour of a Spaniard's vengeance. Give me the packet," he continued, suddenly confronting the intruder—"the papers!" And, snatching the documents from Soto Mayor's grasp, the old man hurriedly approached the silver sconce placed against the sombre trappings of the wall; and, as with trembling hands he held them to the light, a fearful expression of bewilderment and horror crossed his countenance, and with a face the colour of death itself, he slowly resumed his seat, laying the objects of his searching scrutiny before him.

At that moment some one was heard to move in the apartment:

a sound resembling the rustling of a woman's dress fell faintly on the ear, but all were too deeply interested in the events then passing, to take further notice of the trivial interruption.

"Read aloud," exclaimed one from among the group now pressing round the table.

The demand was instantly complied with, and the contents revealed the fact that nearly every member of Mariana's family had, by name, been made instrumental in urging Soto Mayor's absence.

But the hand-writing?" exclaimed the same interrogator, "know you the writing?"

"I do," slowly uttered the father of the murdered girl.

"And it is that of —?"

"Of Elena de Santaguella," was the response.

"Elena de Santaguella!" burst in accents of amazement from the lips of all present; and, as if actuated by one impulse, every eye was turned towards the spot where, a few moments since, their handsome kinswoman was seated; but they now gazed only on a vacant chair.

"This is indeed horrible," at length escaped from the mother's lips.

"Oh, señora!" energetically interposed Soto Mayor, not comprehending the meaning of the scene he witnessed. "Oh, señora," he exclaimed, in heartrending accents, "in pity keep me no longer in this terrible suspense; tell me, I entreat you, tell me where is Mariana, and wherefore do I not behold her here?"

"What was *once* Mariana," solemnly answered Don Raymond Peneida, "reposes *there*," pointing to the high folding doors; "and you shall now behold what our enemies have made her." When, wrapping his long mourning cloak around him; his head dejectingly fallen on his chest, with slow and uneven steps, the bereaved father moved towards the spot he had indicated. The folding doors were thrown back on their hinges, and a chapel, similarly decorated with the room they were leaving, was disclosed.

The body of the once lovely girl, clad in the usual vestments of the dead, was placed on tressalls in the aisle before the altar; a long white drapery was extended carefully over the remains, contrasting forcibly with the sable hangings, on which blazed forth in bold relief, the richly emblazoned escutcheons of the house of Peneida.

The faint perfume of incense ascended in circling wreaths from the silver vases; two priests in full canonicals, stood motionless by the head of the corpse, while two others were stationed at the feet ready to commence the funeral service.

All who witnessed the solemn scene were too deeply absorbed in their own melancholy reflections, to note the presence of the unbidden guest.

The horror of the scene went nigh to bereave Soto Mayor of reason; but when the first notes of the pealing organ rang upon his senses, he woke, as it were from a trance, to the consciousness of the dreadful reality of his loss; and, uttering a scarcely human cry, rushed frantically towards the bier, and, ere his hand could be arrested, tore from the inanimate form the snow-white shroud, exposing to the awe-struck beholders, the livid, spotted skin—the purple tongue protruding to its utmost extremity from between the wide extended lips—the dull glazed eyeballs, burst from their bloody sockets, rested on the dead girl's convulsed and hideous countenance; while the black circle embracing her delicately formed neck, bore ample testimony that the loveliest of Grenada's daughters had suffered a felon's death by the *garrote*.

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Months noted in the calendar were regarded by men as time that had been, since the funeral of Mariana Peneida, and events had occurred during the period necessary to be explained for the elucidation of the final catastrophe of the narrative.

Bowed to the dust with mental suffering, and her proud spirit broken by the ineffaceable disgrace cast upon the escutcheon of their race, the fond and devoted mother of the once idolized Mariana, rested in peace by the side of her devoted child; but the head of the ancient family still remained, supported by one all-engrossing feeling—one indomitable desire, towards which every action of his existence had reference: the never-ceasing, never-tiring exertion to effect all he now cared to obtain in this world—a full, unchecked gratification of revenge.

The scene which took place in the sombre clad hall of her ancestors, as already detailed, so completely baffled the half digested plans of the betrayer, that, taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the attention of her kindred being drawn to the impressive scene before them, Elena de Santaguella glided noiselessly from the chamber, and from that moment all trace of her flight was lost. But, judging from the turn the investigation assumed, that detection must assuredly follow on the perusal of the papers produced by her unhappy dupe, she fled from the house without daring to waste time by possessing herself of the correspondence, which she had for weeks carried on with the authorities, and which papers when seized, left nothing wanting in proof of her unaccountable treachery—for unaccountable it was, since none could fathom the motive insti-

gating the miserable girl to the commission of so dark and horrible a deed.

The papers thus found afforded ample clue to the persons implicated in the bloody act; and while Soto Mayor lay for months upon his couch, his life despaired of by his friends, no exertions were wanting, no wealth spared to obtain information so earnestly coveted by that powerful family, whose sensitive appreciation of honour had been so violently and so unpardonably outraged.

The messenger employed by Elena de Santaguella had been dodged and traced to his lurking place, yet all had been effected with that secrecy and deep consideration ere a step was taken, that not a suspicion of the deeper tragedy meditated, was entertained by any of the intended victims.

So well had their measures been adopted, that the existence even of Soto Mayor was unknown to the Corregidor and his satellites. At first various rumours were circulated, tending to different results, but as time wore on, the deed of violence enacted on the Plaza was remembered only with a shudder, and none cared to moot a subject so repugnant to their feelings, and so dangerous to comment on, when openly alluded to.

Such was the state of affairs in Grenada, as regarded Mariana's family, when in the chapel already described, two figures stood by the vault containing her remains. The gloomy embellishments still shrouded the walls, as on the night of the funeral; but one lamp only now shed its fitful ray upon her tomb.

"Soto Mayor," commenced Don Raymond Pieneda, addressing his companion, "you have now, thanks to the mercy of the Holy Virgin—" and here the haughty noble devoutly crossed himself—"been preserved from the jaws of death, when nought, save that all-powerful interposition, could have snatched you from the very brink of the grave. But now that the blood of long generations of ancestors flows in healthy current through your veins, the time has arrived when——"

"Enough! enough!" interrupted the other, in a deep sepulchral voice, far different from his once joyous tone; "I well know and fully coincide in what you are about to utter, and long ere this should the dark deed have been fearfully avenged, had not sickness paralysed my arm; but that has passed, and now the hour—that hour so fervently prayed for during the many days of weakness and despair, approaches.—No aim—no end have I in life, save the attainment of one sole object, and when *that* is accomplished, I trust to lie down by the side of her, whose cherished memory never by day or night ceases to occupy my thoughts."

The countenance of the speaker, once so handsome, possessed not a trace of its former beauty. His cheeks were colourless and wan—his eyes unnaturally bright and restless, and his whole person seemed neglected, and by him totally uncared for. The noble chief of that ancient house, then gazing upon him, bore deep traces of acute suffering, in the furrows of his cheeks; his hair was perfectly white, and his frame trembled, while listening to the words just uttered; yet more from suppressed passion, than impaired strength.

"Listen," continued Soto Mayor, drawing his long *enchillio* from his bosom, and resting it on Mariana's tomb. "Here, over the remains of her whom I loved, and whose remembrance I shall ever cherish with an affection impossible to be surpassed; here I swear that never for one instant, by day or by night, save to enable me to regain strength necessary for the completion of my resolve, will I rest or withdraw, in deed or thought, from the pursuit of the murderers of my betrothed; and never will I leave the track, until this knife has drank the foul blood of all and every one of those accursed fiends who directly, or in the most remote degree, were accessory to her destruction; and here, in the solemn hour of midnight, by the altar of my faith, and by the tomb of my murdered bride, *I swear it.*"

"As you have sworn, so fulfil your word," uttered Don Raymond Pieneda; "and when your vengeance overtakes the traitress, whose incomprehensible treachery has dealt this blow, then, ere your steel be polluted with her black heart's dye, show her the remains of what was the remote cause of her victim's death, and what at *that* moment will effect her own soul's destruction here, and ensure as her reward, utter, hopeless damnation hereafter;" and, placing a small golden casket in Soto Mayor's hand, he beheld all that remained of the crumbling ashes of the once Embroidered Banner.

* * * * *

Day dawned on Grenada; the tessalated pavement of the gorgeous Alhambra reflected its innumerable brilliant colours and gilded minarets in the clear waters of the flashing fountains; the luxuriant crops covering the wide extending *Véga*, gave promise of an abundant harvest, while in the far distance, the oftly summits of the snow-clad *Sierra Nevada* glittered in the beams of the rising sun.

To whatever spot the eye was turned, all was beautiful and serene; and as the brilliant orb of day burst forth in splendour, few prospects upon earth could compete in grandeur with the magnificent scenery surrounding the once capitol of the Moors.

The city was as yet silent; the inhabitants were still wrapped in repose, and difficult would it have been, when gazing on the

unequalled picture, to believe that at that instant *murder* was busy within its walls; but so it was, and when the busy hum of voices bore evidence that the thousands therein dwelling were commencing their various labours for the day, men might have been observed conversing in low tones, and with mysterious gestures on topics seemingly as appalling as important. In some places parties of three and four congregated together, were listening with eager attention to the recital of the dreadful occurrence narrated by individuals apparently in possession of the facts; and as the hours wore on, and the recital of the deed spread throughout Grenada, the one only subject discoursed and commented on, was the death of Don Antonio Ybanez, the corregidor of the city.

Yes! he was dead,—stabbed to the heart, and found by his servants weltering in his gore, upon his bloody couch.

Investigation was immediately set on foot, but all attempts at elucidating the mystery proved unavailing; no trace of the murderer could be found. It was plain that the hope of plunder could not have instigated him to the deed, for, though various articles of value lay strewn about the chamber, it did not appear the assassin had availed himself of the opportunity of acquiring booty. It was true the chief magistrate was otherwise than popular among his townsmen, and his dissolution in the ordinary course of nature would not probably have been regretted; but to be suddenly cut off in so terrible and mysterious a manner, filled all with dread.

Violent and sudden as his dissolution was, the tomb had scarcely closed over the mangled body, when fresh exclamations of awe resounded through the city, on its becoming known that Don Juan Acentio had shared a similar fate; and, as in the former case, not the vestige of a clue whereby the murderer might be traced, could be discovered.

The mysterious and effectual manner in which the assassinations were committed spread terror upon all, for no man could retire to rest at night, without apprehension that *he* might be the victim next selected.

Political animosity was by some conjectured as giving rise to the atrocities so daringly perpetrated, but when on the following day, the mutilated corpse of Elena de Santaguella's messenger was discovered thrown naked among the offal in the public Plaza, surmise was at fault to find a motive for so many and such barbarous acts.

That the perpetrator was within the walls could not be doubted; and so fearfully was the panic spreading, that, knowing not whom to trust or whom to fear, men gazed suspiciously on each other, as though in the friend before them they beheld the

mysterious avenger; nor was it until the disfigured trunk of the public executioner, presenting a fearful appearance of strangulation having been inflicted, and that too under evident circumstances of peculiar barbarity, that it was remembered that each of the victims already sacrificed, had, in some measure, been implicated in the punishment suffered by Mariana Peineda, and supposition was converted into certainty, on the family of Don Jose Martinez receiving tidings of his demise by assassination near Ronda, when returning homewards from Malaga.

Unauthentic and conflicting were the incredible tales daily circulated regarding the assassin, yet still did he remain undiscovered. Suspicion naturally fell on the family of Peineda, but as speedily silenced, on the absence of each member of that family from the scene of slaughter, having been satisfactorily proved.

It has been stated that the existence even of Soto Mayor was unknown, and so long a period had elapsed since his flight from Grenada, that no one cared to prosecute inquiry regarding him, if, indeed, he was yet numbered among the living.

To detail the numerous assassinations perpetrated in fulfilment of Soto Mayor's dreadful oath, would be but to recapitulate atrocity upon atrocity, each one more sanguinary and horrible in detail than its predecessor. Sometimes months would elapse without a murder being registered, but when the people were in a measure beginning to recover from the horror the frequency of the deeds instilled within them, fresh outrages would break out; but in every act of blood committed the victim was known as one of Mariana's persecutors.

* * * * *

There was a fete at Seville—a masked ball: innumerable lights flashed from the gorgeous halls; music and sweet voices of lovely women sounded through the spacious apartments; massive goblets, filled with the sparkling juice of the luscious grape, and encircled with wreaths of choicest flowers, were displayed; love, mirth, and laughter—all were there; the luxurious banquet offered its tempting restoratives, and all that could please the eye and captivate the senses were lavished with an unsparing hand, to render that abode, and all within it, the realization of a fairy dream.

"You are sad to night," in a low and counterfeited voice, softly murmured a figure arrayed in a dark domino, his features concealed behind a mask. "Why are *you* alone unhappy, while all around are seeking pleasure in this voluptuous scene?"

"You ask a question, Sir Mask," replied the person addressed, "which, were I so inclined, could readily be answered; but wherefore should *you*, a stranger, deem *me* unhappy! and even

were such the case, think you it is probable I should seek these rooms wherein to indulge my sorrow?"

"Yet such is not unfrequently done, lady," resumed the unknown, "for sometimes sorrow presses with so light a clasp across the heart, that any release from solitude and the torture of our own sad thoughts, affords relief."

"You speak as one who had suffered much," answered the lady, "and, perchance, it is from a hope to banish your own reflections, that you, likewise, seek this spot.—Speak."

"Perhaps, lady, other causes may have brought me hither, beyond the one you name; but I can conjecture none influencing you, save a desperate effort to banish painful retrospection."

"Who, then, do you take me for?" quickly asked the masked female. "You cannot know me?"

"It may be so," answered her companion; "and yet, methinks, I could repeat some passages in your existence, which would convince you, you are not totally forgotten."

"Say you so?" she replied, with a forced assumption of gaiety; "then to what do you attribute the cause of my supposed sadness?"

"Love and remorse," almost inaudibly whispered her companion.

The figure started as though some sudden pang shot across her brain, but instantly resuming a forced composure, she replied, "In the name of the Holy Virgin, tell me whom you are?"

"That you shall know," was the almost whispered reply, "but not here; I bear a message to you, which must be delivered this night, but this place is too public: if you will follow, I will lead where none may witness our interview."

As though spell-bound, and trembling in every limb, the veiled figure, impelled by some irresistible impulse, bowed her acquiescence, and as the mask slowly glided through the gorgeously decorated corridors, she noiselessly followed in his steps; when, winding their way towards one of the illuminated balconies overhanging the Guadalquivir, the mask and his companion were hidden from the gaze of the revellers.

What passed at that interview never was divulged, beyond the statement of persons below, who, attracted by the sound of gaiety within the building, tarried in the street to listen to the sweet melody of the music. By them it was asserted that while looking towards the house, two figures, issuing from one of the casements, stood as if in conversation on the balconies adorning that front of the edifice. From the gestures of both parties, the subject of discourse appeared to be fraught with no trivial interest. At length the taller figure, thrusting something

before the face of the female, seemed as if appending it to her dress, at the same time casting away his mask. At that instant a scream, fearfully shrill and awful, issuing from the spot, struck terror to the hearts of all who heard it. The taller figure uplifted his arm; something bright as steel glittered in the moonlight, and a dull, heavy sound, as of a powerful blow, followed.

The revellers, forsaking the dance, rushed in the direction of the balconies, but all there was solitary and still; but the next morning, the body of a female was taken out of the Guadalquivir; a small golden box containing nothing beyond some few particles of tinder, was suspended round her neck, while a long Spanish knife, firmly planted in her heart, ended the dark catalogue of crime and consequent wretchedness of Elena de Santaguella.

TO MY GODCHILD.

AT THE SEA-SIDE.

Mina! my little pet,
 Can memory e'er forget
 Thy joyful birth?
 I, too, was happy then,
 All careless, free from pain,
 Went smiling forth.
 Flowers bestrewed my way;
 Clothed in bright array
 Was mother Earth.
 The early morn to me
 Spoke peace, tranquility,
 No vain regret.
 But now a cloud glooms o'er,
 Dark'ning for evermore,—
 My sun is set.
 As o'er yon summer sea—
 All cheerless though to me—
 I cast mine eye,

And view each tiny sail
Wooing the light-wing'd gale
 So gracefully,
While youthful voices hymn
A chaunt of welcoming
 I can but wish for thee
Ever prosperity
 The like to share.
To waft thee, welcome guest,
To the haven of thy rest,
 Safe anchor there.

Or if a stormy cloud,
And fierce winds, battling loud,
 Thy progress mar,
Low bending 'neath the gale,
Thy tiny silken sail,
 From shore afar,
I'll strive, with steady hand,
To steer thee safe to land
 Through ocean's war.
Right thankful I to save
From out the briny wave
 My little pet.
To bid her banish fear,
And braid her golden hair,
 Be happy yet.

As time speeds swiftly on,
Glad childhood's years are gone,
 Sweet Mina, say?
When thy light footsteps glide
As south wind o'er the tide
 At break of day,
My steps all feebly slow,
Drear age my form bows low,
 My scant hair grey,—
Thou'lt be *my* guardian then,
Companion o'er the main,
 Call back the past?
Then, tearful, trim the sail,
While wintry breezes hail
 My voyage, the last.

C. E. NUGENT.

THE FATALIST OF THE DRACHENFELS.

BY C. E. NUGENT.

It was an early day in the month of June last,—I had been for some time admiring the view from the summit of the Drachenfels, and was about midway in my descent to the river's bank below, when a sudden storm, peculiar to those mountain regions, forced me to take shelter beneath a mass of rock, which overhung the pathway. Some children, whose daily occupation seemed to be the offering of neatly woven chaplets and wild flowers to the mountain sight-seers, were already clustered there, and very shortly we were joined by another individual, who, as he shook the rain-drops from his garments, smiled bitterly and yet sadly, as the thunder awoke a thousand echoes round, and the lightning played about the forms of the crouching children, who, accustomed to this strife of the elements, still prattled on as heretofore. In answer, most probably to a look of mine, for my lips were closed, the stranger remarked "They do right: small cause have they for fear. Instinct tells them, that if the decree has gone forth, it is vain for them to struggle,—vain is the help of man. See how they smile: it may be their time is not yet."

In this speech his manner and voice betrayed no impiety—no empty vaunt—no defiance to the Ruler of the storm; but rather a conviction that what he had given utterance to, he firmly believed. "Nay," said I in turn, "you must allow for early habit, and happily they are too young to reason about life and death; but the time will come, alas! too soon, when a conviction of the uncertainty of life will be painfully forced upon them."

"True, true; the time of this, as you say, will come, but think you not, when that period arrives, along with it the feeling will arise, that no human power or strategy can avoid the decrees of Fate; that the necessity of bowing to it is unconquerable?"

"I see what you would say: I do not countenance non-exertion to avoid the ills of life, any more than I would say stand still, when pursued by a mad dog; but ultimate escape has, from the earliest dawn of life, been predestined. Deem you not the proverb true—Fixed as Fate?"

Any immediate answer to this was evaded by the rain-drops becoming less frequent, and the little group starting up and

calling our attention to a beauteous rainbow, which arched over the distant high ground. There spoke the Godhead. The scene around now became doubly beautiful and grand, much more so than it had been a short hour ago, when lit up in all its unclouded summer brightness.

We thither turned our gaze, and then again our eyes met. I knew nothing of my companion beyond what I have already stated, but sure was I from that moment, that, however much we might differ on certain points, we each had a common goal, that to whatever degree our ideas might clash respecting our certain progress to "that bourne whence no traveller returns," still the end, our final change, our future lot for good or ill, required no arguments, no doubting words.

The children prattled on, but we renewed not the subject of our previous discourse. Anon the rain entirely ceased, and together we proceeded on our way. Prior to reaching the level ground, we discovered that each contemplated the same plan, to explore for the next few days the surrounding beauties of hill and dale, each, in all probability, would have achieved his wanderings in a different manner, had he been left entirely to himself, but, as it was, finding ourselves in the same hotel at Mehlem, 'neath which

" The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground."

We, in a few words, agreed during our sojourn there, not to be entirely strangers to each other.

It would be impossible and tiresome to recount the scraps of conversation, all bearing upon the same point, which we held together; many renowned sages of ancient days were quoted in support of his opinions. Homer, Hesiod, Socrates, and Plato, Xeno and all the stoics, besides a host of others, winding up with, and dwelling more particularly upon Lucretius.

We were perfectly agreed concerning that Roman poet, but I ventured to hint at only a limited assent deducible from the writings of almost all the others he had enlisted on his side, and that as to Socrates, it could only be traditional, as none of his writings were handed down to us. This led to many a learned discussion, very uninteresting, except to those engaged in them; so suffice it to tell that on the eve of our separation, when we had wandered forth on the banks of the Rhine, and had seated ourselves nearly opposite to the island of Nonnenwerth, he gave me the following brief outline of his life.

" It boots little to dwell upon my early boyhood's days. At school my chief companion and friend was a boy about my own age; we had not previously known each other; 'at home,' as

the school phrase goes—indeed, he came from a different part of the country.

“It was ‘election Saturday’—a joyous season for the Eton boy. I was about to ‘take leave’ on the following Monday, while Harry St. John was to remain another ‘half.’ He introduced me to his parents, who had come to witness the festivities at Surly Hall, and they smilingly listened to, but somewhat unwillingly granted his request to spend the first week of the holidays at my home. For he was an only son, their joy and pride, and they naturally were loath to part with him, even for a short week. However, our boon was granted, and Mr. St. John laughingly styled us Pylades and Orestes, expressing a hope that I should be enabled to pay my young friend a visit also at no distant day.

“It was the fifth morning of Harry’s stay at my home—I remember it as well as if it were only yesterday. The house was full; a pic-nic was proposed to a lovely spot on a green-hill side, renowned for its picturesque beauties. It was some seven miles away, but Harry and myself preferred walking thither instead of being mounted on the dickey of a carriage; so away we went, long before the rest of the party were even preparing for a start. Truth to say, I had been previously aware that a marriage was to take place that morning in a neighbouring village through which our path lay, and we hoped to be able to witness some of the rural festivities on such an occasion, more particularly as the bride was dubbed the Beauty of the village, and there was to be a dance on the green in honour of the day. This the old butler had told me, and we kept our intention a profound secret, meaning to surprise the pic-nic party when we joined them with a recital of our adventures. The bridal procession was just issuing from the church door as the village street came in sight. In a short space the bridegroom, a young farmer, asked us to the breakfast, and we in all the joyousness of sixteen summers, right gladly accepted his invitation. In course of time healths were proposed, rustic compliments passed around, and then the song and the dance began.

“‘All went merry as a marriage bell.’ We fully entered into the scene; chose our partners, and footed it with the rest, most glad was I that such an opportunity offered for the enjoyment of my dearest school friend. But our time was limited; before we hied away, however, we lingered to hear a short ditty, the words of which it seems had been composed by bridegroom a few weeks since, and the which he had been heard to sing ‘neath the lattice of his lady love,’ as was laughingly whispered round, and which ‘for the last time,’ he was called

upon, as in duty bound, to sing. Accordingly, with a smile on on his blooming bride, he sang the following song, which I remember well, for not one scene or word that passed on that day will ever fade from my memory. They called it

TRUST IN ME.

When fortune smiles in Spring's glad hour,
From care and sorrow free ;
When tears are but an April show'r,
Believe, and trust in me.

When sickness comes, thy cheek is pale,
And clouds gloom dark o'er thee ;
Should human aid *then* aught avail,
Believing, trust in me.

This was sung in a good, honest, manly voice ; so, heartily wishing health and happiness to the new-married couple, we proceeded on our way.

"Well," said Harry, after a pause, "whatever *our* future lot may be,—whatever ties we may form in after days, we will swear friendship true, at all events. What a happy scene we have just left ! You remember what old Horace says,—

"Beatus ille qui procul negotiis,
Ut prisca gens mortalium,
Paterna rura bobus exercet suis,
Solutus omni fœnore."

But," continued he, laughing, "I trust that neither of us shall have ever cause to envy our rustic bridegroom's lot ; still, in case of need, we will call to mind the good old saying,—

"Amicus certus in re incertâ cernitur ;"

and, friends, whate'er betide, we will ever be." We pressed each other's hands, then bounded on again, for we had no time to spare.

In reaching our destination a long détour might be avoided by crossing the Severn, about half a mile from where our path-way lay ; and, did we but find a stray boat ready to convey us across, we should save at least a good half hour ; so we agreed to try our fortunes, and made straight for the river. I have spoken in the plural number, have said *we*,—but, alas ! it was I—I alone who first thought of this plan ; it was I who first paused in my onward course, and pointed to the river,—I the counsellor, the tempter, and the guide from the broad and sunny track of safety, to the cold and narrow grave.

We found a boat; a small boy, of some twelve years of age, was dozing on the bank, who said that the boat belonged to his father, who was away at the wedding we had just left, and who would not be back again for some time. In all the heedlessness of youth, his scruples were overcome. I remember saying that we would trust to our lucky stars,—perhaps we should be able to discover some one on the opposite bank who would take back the boat, if not, I would send some one,—that the boy had better stay where he was. Many a time have I thought of it since; I remembered the danger the fisher-boy—although well accustomed to the river—might run, in returning alone by himself, but blindly forgot our own inexperience, that my best beloved friend was my companion. The boat was small, but the light breeze portended nothing to those at all experienced in sailing matters, of which we were both profoundly ignorant, our pursuits at Eton tending altogether to cricket, and such like amusements on the dry land. We had safely, though not expeditiously, traversed more than half the stream, which is of no inconsiderable breadth at the point I am speaking of, when, in attempting to alter the position of the sail, as we feared to be carried too far down the river, the boat turned completely over; poor Harry, St. John, my friend, the guest who had been entrusted to me by his doting parents, sunk to rise no more. On the discovery of his body, some hours afterwards, a cut was found on his temple, showing that he must have struck the side of the boat in his headlong fall, thereby stunning him, for he was a good swimmer; while I, unable to swim, on rising to the surface of the stream, caught hold of the boat, and clung there until it drifted to a turn in the river, a short way further down. I need not paint the rest,—the extreme sorrow of my own parents, the distraction and despair of Mr. and Mrs. St. John, or the utter prostration of myself. Then first I began to be what is termed a fatalist. The same fate has attended me through life; good cause have I indeed to know and feel that all the main points in our existence here below are pre-ordained,—if to happiness, well and good—be thankful; if to far other scenes,—scenes of hopes blighted, and existence made to wear the semblance of a desert and a grave, repine not, but still strive; and hard—very hard, believe me, is the task, to love your God, and not loathe the converse, the society, or the proffered friendship of your fellow man. I might tell you many things that I have witnessed, that have happened to myself, all tending to confirm me in my belief. I might tell you of many a green and flowery spot, which, on my approach, or worse, when I have passed its bounds, has suddenly become a miserable and accursed waste, a wilderness beneath my tread,

all girt by a storm-clad sky without a star. I might tell you how the bowl has been essayed, then with my brain on fire, how I have madly prayed for the cup of oblivion, from fabled Lethe's stream, and woke to a yet sadder morrow; but no! already I have told more than for many a long year I have divulged to mortal man; it is enough, I have wandered in the far east; there fate, or kismet, as they call it, is slavishly bowed to, and acknowledged without any effort to postpone, although it be impossible to avoid the evil day; no, they strive not ever, as I have done, to make the pathway of life more cheering to the outward eye, but smoke "the pipe of contentment," as they style it, and sluggishly await their doom. This I counsel not, I have no pity for sluggards such as these. But again, enough, enough, trust me; exertion may delay, but it cannot counteract the decrees of fate.

He rose, and we slowly bent our steps to whence we had set out. My companion first spoke again, for the harrowing remembrances called up had seemed to make him again an actor in the sad catastrophe he had just related; and suffering, deep and unhoping, were so visibly marked on his features, that I had not the heart to break the silence.

He now spoke of more ancient days,—as one accustomed to subdue his feelings,—he spoke of the many ruins, the now chiefless castles, rising high above the Rhine, on either bank, in its long and tortuous course; all their true history, shrouded in the dark history of the middle ages, and for the most part recounted in old, and perhaps baseless, legends. Truly too, poor fellow! he had an eye for the beautiful and the picturesque; and though his manner was still somewhat excited, like the heaving of the ocean wave long after the storm has passed away, he dwelt with a poet's rapture on the fair scene spread out before him, and with evidently a well-stored mind, recalled the history of past centuries, the dark story of the present time, and stretched out visions of future years. I was going to leave early on the morrow. We were about to part, we might never meet again. I could not help hazarding one question, a hope that he who seemed so alive to all that is winning and beautiful in creation, to all the summer paths of life, would, at no distant day, pluck and appropriate to himself a flower from fair Nature's garden, all simplicity and truth, who would cheer him on his way, lighten, if she could not altogether avert, the, in his own language, "decrees of Fate."

In all our conversations, he had not even hinted at the fairer portion of creation in connexion with himself, so I was emboldened to address him thus; but words would I have given, had my lips on that point remained sealed. He seized my hand,

and with a look of the deepest, saddest feeling I ever witnessed, exclaimed, while an unbidden tear seemed actually to quiver in his eye, and long to be released,—“ Right, right, a thousand times right, my friend; the only real solace in affliction, the only true happiness in this our transitory state, it sheds a halo alike around our sorrows and our joys. If this be already your lot, may the flower you have chosen never fade away. If not, and the path is still open to you, tarry not on your way, delay not to pluck a flower while it is yet in your grasp, and may success attend you, may your path be *all* pleasantness and peace,—for me that path is closed, barred out, for ever.”

His brow was haggard now, and the colour lately called up in his cheeks had faded all away; he wrung my hand, bid me God speed, and I saw him no more. On the morrow, although myself early, I found that he had already taken his departure, but she wish and hope is strong upon me that we may meet again.

It only remains for me to add, that I verily believe I am becoming a bit of a fatalist myself, for more than once I have sat me down with the intention of writing upon other subjects, but the image of my poor friend has always flitted before me, and arrested my pen. Let me hope that every one who glances over this short page of Life, will look with an eye of pity on, and make all due allowance for, the Fatalist of the Drachenfels.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

BY MRS. ABDY.

FAREWELL to thee, France, let them say what they will,
Thou art full of glad pastimes and revelries still;
Farewell to trim gardens, and blue, sunny skies,
And picturesque peasants with dark, laughing eyes;
Farewell to the dance on the soft moonlit grass,
The brightly-deck'd “Fair,” and the crowded “Ducasse;”
Yet I leave not in sadness this region of mirth,
Since I sail for dear England—the land of my birth.

The semblance of gloom my loved country may wear,
And the brow of her sons may be shadowed with care,
Yet hers are the charities, bounteous and wide,
The calm, holy Sabbath, the peaceful fire-side;
I think on fond meetings, and friends tried and true,
As the white cliffs of Dover arise to my view,
And feel that fair France, with her music and mirth,
Can match not dear England—the land of my birth.

PRAYER FOR AN INFIDEL.

“ When, in your last hour (think of this), all faculty in the broken spirit shall fade away, and die into inanity—imagination, thought, effort, enjoyment—then at last will the night-flower of *belief* alone continue blooming, and refresh with its perfumes in the last darkness.”

RICHTER'S “ *Levana*.”

“ *Fear not—believe not !*” what dread words are these ?

Earth, hear them not ; air, echo not the sound !
Think ye such speech can for one moment ease
The soul's keen anguish, o'er the heart's deep wound ?

Infidel, *we fear not*. Fears are not meet,
When He is with us—deigns to bid us come,
And cast our guilt and sorrows at His feet :
The weary prodigal returning home.

Believe not ? Would'st thou take our hope away—
Our only refuge in this night of woe ?
Oh, could we thus live on from day to day,
Were not the land in view to which we go ?

Listen to *thee !* would that thou mightest know
How vain thy boasted learning seems to be !
For, in the search of wisdom here below,
Who lacks *the truth* learns nought but vanity.

The God of Israel hear our prayer, and give
The only knowledge that can peace impart !
The God of Israel grant that thou may'st live
To bless and praise him with believing heart !

C. A. M. W.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LANDAULET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK."

BUSINESS of considerable importance carried me one day towards Lincoln Inn Fields, where having been unavoidably detained, although any thing rather than amused, I accepted my lawyer's hospitable invitation to dinner, from which somewhat more agreeable pastime, I did not arise until the ancient watchman's drowsy, but not dulcet tone informed the learned neighbourhood that it was past ten o'clock.

It so chanced that on that evening my family had an engagement, and my corpulent and flaxen wigged coachman expressed himself equally desirous to devote the remainder of that afternoon to his own particular and private amusement. I desired, on his setting me down at the mansion of my "man of wisdom," that he should forthwith install his horses in the stable, since I purposed to return home in one of those now obsolete antique, though not very aristocratic vehicles, yclept a hackney coach.

At about eleven o'clock the equipage destined for my accommodation, was summoned from a neighbouring stand, whereupon a strangely apparelled mortal, bearing a large plated medal around his neck, which badge of merit had indisputably been accorded for some particular good deed, intimated the purport of the message to a sleepy descendant of Jehu, who with much difficulty, was aroused from a lethargic slumber enjoyed amid a mass of damp hay and tattered horse cloths.

But when his waking faculties were eventually brought into play, the customary methods much in vogue for propelling carriages by animal power were put in practice, and an antiquated Landaulet rolled slowly and heavily to the door.

For the better effecting an entrance into the interior of the conveyance, the jingling steps were let down, when having unravelled themselves to their utmost length, as if shrinking from the contamination of pollution with the pavement, they pertinaciously inclined inwards, standing underneath their huge parent as if to crave shelter in the protection of its shade; my foot slipped as I attempted to ascend, and I grazed my shin against the rusty iron. At last, however, with much perseverance and difficulty, I surmounted the obstacle opposed to my ingress, and

reluctantly placed my weary frame on the cold musty squabs, which had once gloried in the appellation of cushions.

I was about to undertake a formidable journey; I lived in Regent's Park, and as the miserable half-starved horses attached to the vehicle, showed every symptom of having been worked during the whole day, the aspect of things bid fair to promise a protracted sojourn in the old landaulet, which prognosticated a duration of some hours prior to the possibility of my reaching home.

Off started the quadrupeds at last; the coachman urged them on with whip and tongue; the body of the jarvey swung to and fro; the cracked glasses—at least the little that remained—shook and chattered like the teeth of some poor wretch in a confirmed ague; the straw underneath my feet not only felt, but likewise smelt damp, while the rain oozed through the gaping roof in chill and heavy drops.

I felt cold, and attempted to draw up the front window, but, alas! as nothing came to my summons, save the frame, I was necessarily but little benefited by my pains. My position was otherwise than enviable or exhilarating, but well knowing the evil was unavoidably to be met, I wrapped my cloak closely around my shivering body, and in rather a sulky, discontented humour, sank into a deep reverie.

The vehicle continued—but certainly not rejoicing—on its way—the antique axles and pannels shook, squeaked, and rattled, as if suffering martyrdom from the agony occasioned by the motion;—from my reverie I at length fell into a doze, which, thanks to *some* fatigue and much claret, soon terminated in a deep sleep.

Gradually the rumbling, gingling noise assumed to my imagination a less unwholesome sound; the inharmonious continuations so offensive to the ear, softened into something more approximating towards harmony, until at length, the whole blending into a far from disagreeable voice, methought I could distinguish intelligible accents.

I listened attentively to the low murmurs which first attracted my notice, and at last distinctly heard and carefully treasured in my memory, what was neither more nor less than the lament of the identical landaulet wherein I then sat; the poor body seemed to sigh, and the wheels became spokesmen, but it was not until reaching Portland-place that the nearly worn out conveyance took sufficient courage to enter on a detail of its history. At length, however, having fanned itself with the faded remnant of a once embroidered side pocket, the "leathered convenience," which for the nonce held me prisoner, thus essayed its tale:—

"I am about twenty-three years of age," sighed my equipage; "I was born in Long-Acre—the birth-place of the aristocracy of my race; and Hobson was the only parent that I can recollect as having lavished kindness and approval on me during those joyous days of youth. No four-wheeled carriage could by possibility have entered upon life with brighter prospects; alas, it is now my hard lot to detail the vicissitudes that render me what I am. I was ordered by an Earl, who was on the point of marriage with a beautiful heiress, and I was necessarily fitted up in the most expensive style.

"My complexion was pale yellow; on my sides I had coronets and supporters; my interior was soft, comfortable, and luxurious; my rumble behind highly satisfactory; my dickey was perfection and garnished with a hammer-cloth; my boots were capacious and splendidly polished; my pockets were ample and embroidered with lace; and my leathers in excellent and well-cleaned condition. When I stood at the Earl's door on the morning of his wedding, it was admitted by all who beheld me, that a neater *turn-out* had never left Long-Acre. Lightly did my noble possessor press my cushions, as I carried him to St. George's Church, and when the ceremony concluded, and the happy pair sat side by side within me, the Earl kissed the lips of his lovely countess, and I felt proud, not of the wealth of my occupants, on account of their exalted station, but because they were content and happy.

"Oh, how merrily my wheels whirled in those halcyon days; I bore my joyous burden to their country seat; I flew about the country, returning and making wedding visits; I went to races with sandwiches and champagne in my pockets; and I spent many a long night in an Inn yard, envied and gazed at by all beholders, while my lord and my lady were presiding at country assemblies.

"Mine was a life of sunshine, gilded with smiles, and little did I calculate on the possibility of witnessing a reverse of fortune; but, alas! ladies have ever been esteemed capricious, and in an hapless hour for me, my beautiful mistress suddenly discovered I was too heavy and wholly unfit for London service. My fate was sealed, and without one particle of regret, the fair being whom I had for months carried, quitted the shelter of a roof for ever, under which so many happy hours of her young life had flitted by.

"Fresh instructions were issued to Hobson; her ladyship took possession of a chariot eight years younger than myself; I was driven to Long-Acre to be disposed of, and became 'a second-hand article.'

"My humiliation happened at an unlucky period, for con-

tinual racketing in the country had for the time quite unhinged me. I required bracing, and had wholly lost my colour ; my paternal relative, however, undertook my repair, and I was ere long exhibited, painted green, and offered " For sale, second-hand."

" After standing for a month at Hobson's, who, by the way, was not over civil to his own child, but made a great favour about giving me house room, I one day found myself scrutinized by a gentleman of very fashionable appearance. He was in immediate want of a carriage ; I was fortunately exactly the description of vehicle he required, and within a quarter of an hour the transfer was arranged. My new purchaser was on the point of eloping with a lady : he was attached to *her*—four horses were attached to *me* ; and at midnight, I was waiting at the corner of Grosvenor-street. I thought myself fortunate, indeed ; I anticipated another marriage—another matrimonial trip—another honeymoon.

" Alas ! my destined expedition was not calculated to prove of advantage either to my comfort or respectability. My owner, a military man, was at his post punctual to the appointed time ; he seemed nervous and agitated, frequently looked at his watch, passed rapidly before one of the houses, and often gazed on the drawing-room windows. At length, a light appeared, the sash was thrown up, and a female figure, muffled in a cloak and veil, stood on the balcony. She leaned anxiously forward ; he uttered a few words ; and without reply, the lady re-entered the mansion.

" The street door revolved upon its hinges, and a brisk little waiting maid came forth with divers packages, which she disposed of in various parts of my person. Meanwhile, the Colonel—for such was his rank—entered the hall, and in brief time returned bearing in his arms a fainting, weeping woman : he placed her by his side on my cushions. My rumble was instantly occupied by the soubrette and my master's valet, and we drove off rapidly for Brighton.

" The Colonel was a man of fashion, handsome, insinuating, profligate, and unfeeling ; the lady—it is painful to speak of her—what she *had* been she could never be again—and what she then *was* she herself had yet to learn.

" The darling daughter of a rich old man, she had—when too young to weigh well the awful and irrepreivable step she was taking—bestowed her hand and wealth on one who regarded her but as the means of propping his decayed finances, and she received in return naught but a coronet, to attain which, many and many a pure and lovely woman has sold herself to all that is contemptible in character.

"The father, happily for him, did not live to witness his child's disgrace, nor see her once smiling countenance grow pale and worn with suffering and shame.

"Neglected by her husband, the wife plunged into the whirlpool of fashionable dissipation, and tasted the deadly poisons which are so frequently sought as the remedies for a breaking heart. From folly, she glided almost imperceptibly to imprudence, from imprudence to dissimulation and deceit, and finally descended into guilt.

"Was the run-away wife *then* happier, that when without murmur or complaint she patiently suffered unmerited ill-usage and insult from a husband, who was incapable of appreciating her excellence?—far otherwise!!!

"But to return—At Brighton my wheels rattled along the cliffs as briskly and as loud as the noblest equipage there; yet, no female turned a look of recognition towards *my* windows—the eyes of former friends were studiously averted.

"I bore my lady through the crowded streets, and occasionally waited for her at the doors of theatres; but at the gates of the virtuous and respectable, at balls and private assemblies, I, alas! was never called, and consequently never stopt the way. Like a disabled soldier, I ceased to bear arms, and was completely crest fallen.

"I saw a crisis was approaching; my mistress was unable to brook the visible contempt she experienced, especially as she *knew* it was observed; her soft cheek lost its roseate bloom, her bright eyes their captivating lustre; and as her beauty became less brilliant, she was soon taught the dreadful truth, that with the waning of her charms—the sole attraction which had made the Colonel her admirer—his love was fast passing away.

"Eventually, the heartless wretch grew weary of his victim—opportunity was sought and readily found for estrangement—they quarrelled—parted—and the lost woman remained without friends, without money, and without a name!

"This state of things could not possibly long continue; I was seized by a plebeian horse dealer, on whose premises I lodged; roughly torn from my warm coach-house, and ignominiously fastened behind a waggon, I commenced a painfully slow journey towards London. Eventually, I was introduced to the Bazaar, in King-street, Portman-square, where the carriage society, if not particularly select, was undeniably extensive.

"Accustomed as I had been to the enjoyment of all the advantages money could procure, and never having been addicted to low company, words cannot describe the anguish I endured when for the first time contemplating the motley chaos of vulgar vehicles I was herded with.

"Daily, three, four, or more of my companions were wheeled away from that hospital for my maimed brethren, and, as I thought, to be broken up and destroyed; and many an oily tear have I dropt from my lamps at witnessing the departure of some tottering cab, or broken down chariot, screaming with pain as the change of position went to dislocate every joint in the frames. But I might have spared the sympathy—they were considerably more fortunate than myself—they were once again about to appear in the gay world, while I was left to digest my haughty displeasure as best I could, amid heterogeneous amalgamations of conveniences, from the cast off coach of state built for some defunct Lord Mayor, down to the humble one-horse chaise of the retired tradesman, fashioned no one knew where, and for whom no one cared to inquire.

"It was a dull period of the year, and for a long time my wheels ceased to revolve. I got cold and damp, and the moths found their way into my inside. One or two persons who came to inspect me, declined becoming purchasers; and peering closely at my pannels, said something about "old scratch." This hurt my feelings, for if my former possessor was not quite so good as she might have been, it was no fault of mine. After a tedious inactivity, I was at last bought cheap by a young physician, who having rashly left his provincial practice to set up in London, took it into his head that nothing could be done there by a medical man who did not go upon wheels; accordingly he forthwith hired a house in a fashionable situation, and there set me up, and bid my vender put me down in his bill. It is quite astonishing how we fled about the streets and squares, *acting great practice*; those who knew us by sight must have thought we had an immense deal to do; but, alas! we practised nothing but locomotion. "Some medical men thin the population," so says slander; my master thinned nothing but his horses—they were the only *good jobs* that came in his way, and certainly he made the most of them. He was obliged to *feed* them, but he was very rarely *fee'd* himself. It so happened that nobody consulted us; and the unavoidable consumption of the family infected my master's pocket, and his little resources were soon in a rapid decline; still he kept a bold and gallant heart. In one respect indeed he closely resembled a snake, displayed in a quack's shop window—he was never out of spirits. Deeply in debt, his name was on every body's books, always excepting the memoranda ones of those who wanted physicians; still I was daily put in request; and though nobody called him in, he was to be seen sitting extremely forward on my cushions, apparently conning over notes supposed to have been taken after numerous critical cases and eventful consultations. Our own case at last

became hopeless, and our further progress was arrested! Execution was in the house—servants met with their deserts, and were turned off—goods were seized—my master was knocked up, and I was knocked down for one hundred and twenty pounds.

“Again my beauties blushed for a while unseen, but in due time I was newly painted, and like some other made up personages, looked when at a distance, almost as good as new. Fortunately for me, an elderly country curate, just at this period, was presented with a living, and the new incumbent thought it incumbent on him to present his fat lady and his thin daughter with a leather convenience, wherewith to dazzle the eyes of the plebeians in the vicinity of the rectory. My life was now a rural one, and for eight long years nothing worth recording happened. The rector died; of course he had nothing more to do with the *living*!—it passed into other hands, and a clerical income being—pity that it should—no inheritance, his relict, suddenly plunged into widowhood and poverty, had the aggravated misery of mourning for an affectionate husband, while she was conscious that the luxuries and almost the necessities of life were for ever snatched from herself and child.

“Once more I found myself in London, but my beauty was gone; I had lost the activity of youth, and when I once chanced slowly to creak through Long Acre, Hobson, my very parent, who was standing at his door sending forth a newly-born britchka, glanced at me scornfully, and knew me not. But I was become callous to the indifference and slights of my once admirers, and in truth I had long relinquished all endeavour to drive myself into the belief that any artiste could restore my pristine beauty and elasticity of carriage.

Patent strapping was plentifully supplied, and for a time eased the burning fever in my cracked boxes; an endeavour was made to patch up my inside, which partially succeeded, while varnish was unsparingly daubed over the exterior, concealing, in a degree, the deep furrows “fast living,” and a dissipated youth, had wrought on my appearance. Again was I painted and picked out with a gay colour; a coach-house was appropriated for my use, and I was known as “the glass coach.”

My pursuits at this epoch of my existence materially changed. I was in constant request morning and evening, and seldom was enabled to retire to rest after a long night of weariness and work, until the earliest of all two-wheeled vehicles, the scavenger’s cart, commenced its rounds. Shopping, and waiting at places of public amusement, occupied my time; and great was the variety, and numerous the description, of parties by whom I was now continually engaged.

Country families, visiting London for a week, considered my

services indisputably essential ; and little mercy did they evince towards me, when once safely out of my master's yard. I was taken to pic-nics, and short excursions round the suburbs innumerable. Hampton Court was as familiar to me as it once was to Cardinal Wolsey ; while Greenwich, Richmond, and the Zoological Gardens, I verily believe, from long practice, I could have found without horses.

"Religious, old ladies hired me for church on a Sunday, and many a couple have I carried *from* church on a week day, who ere long cursed me in their hearts for not having "*broke down*," ere I was made instrumental in rivetting those links which they eventually discovered were neither golden, or fashioned by cobwebs.

"On summer evenings, "*the Spaniard*" at Hampstead was a favourite resort ; while, on dark, rainy nights, I have been driven to some lonely church-yard, and compelled to return carrying one or more of the cold, appalling tenants of the desecrated grave.

"In fact, my occupations were "*legion* ;" while want of rest, acting on a shattered body, speedily "*did me up*." My master was overwhelmed with constant complaints urged against me by his customers. The bad habits and disagreeable qualities attributed to me by reason of age, were pronounced unbearable, and impossible to be longer tolerated : the days of my activity had passed away, and I was pronounced "*slow*." While my owner, facetiously observing it would prove "*a black job*" to him if he got nothing for me, succeeded in persuading a neighbouring cabinet maker to take me off his hands. The bargain was struck, and I became "*a mourning coach*," in which capacity, it was urged, my stoutness would prove a recommendation rather than otherwise, in my new line of business.

"A black top was forthwith nailed to my head. The paint-brush again smeared my body, four cast long-tailed blacks from the Life Guards were appended to my splinter bar, and the first day I turned out in my new adornments, I had the gratification to hear my sombre-clad insides—who, by the way, inherited considerable property by the demise of the body we were following—declare it was quite a pleasure attending a ceremony so excellently conducted and "*got up*," and so highly creditable to every one concerned.

"The complete change in my habits, consequent on the novel position I was placed in, tended, in no trifling degree, towards prolonging my existence ; I could not complain of paucity of exercise, but my carriage, when moving, was slow and impressive. No opportunity offered of being upset by galloping short round a corner, and I was equally exempt from the chance of being

kicked to atoms through the pole breaking, when furiously dashing down hill; all now with me were staid and grave; and manifold opportunities occurred for studying the different characters I was constantly engaged in conveying to divers fashionable cemeteries in the vicinity of the metropolis.

Much misery, and more hypocrisy, have been my temporary tenants; but time is not given to recount the endless variety of feeling predominating in the bosoms of the multitudinous occupants of my dismal anterior. The theme is too melancholy to be treated lightly, and the brief period we may remain together is rapidly drawing to a close.

Quiet and regular though my occupations were, the hand of time, and weight of the mourners' bodies, pressed heavily on my springs; my master, therefore, deeming the possibility of a break down taking place, when employed on my powerful duties as in no degree unlikely to occur, divested my body of its black draperies and cushions; and, for the last time, I was ticketed, "for sale."

I knew I could not maintain a gentlemanly appearance much longer; and my master knew it likewise.

An open shed was now the only shelter offered to my once emblazoned panels. One by one, my once praiseworthy qualities forsook me. I grew restless and unsteady; I sunk from my pristine high estate; I dwindled into a lazy vehicle: the very tyres manifested a repugnance to my crumbling wheels; while my spokes, as if anxious for liberation, shook with incurable paralysis within their decayed sockets. Straw was insultingly thrust upon me—I was among the fallen. Yes, truth will out—I was now a hackney coach, and my number was 100. What tongue can tell the degradations I have since that time endured?—the vile description of persons who familiarly have *called* me—the wretches who have sat in me. Never, oh! never can this misery be told. Daily I take my stand in the same dull street, and nightly I am driven to the minor theatres—to oyster shops—to desperation. One day, when empty and unoccupied, I was hailed by two police officers, bearing between them a prisoner. It was the seducer of my second, and ill-fated mistress; a first crime had done its usual work, it had prepared his mind for a second, and now the destroyer had perpetrated a deed of iniquity, which, although in the eyes of God and man, fell far short in sin when compared with his prior abasement; yet was it made cognizable by the law, while the perpetrator of the greater evil might—had that been the only blot on his escutcheon—have raised his unblushing front in defiance of the opprobrium or censure of the whole world itself.

Months passed away, and I am becoming more and more en-

feebled. The journeys and burdens which in the joyous days of my happy youth I was wont to perform, and carry without the slightest exertion, wholly free from anticipation of the numerous dangers which in a crowded thoroughfare beset me on every side—those very excursions were undertaken with aversion, and performed with incredible fatigue, and frequently with disgust, while my fragile limbs shaking at every jolt, or an uneven stone encountered, bore testimony to the shattered state of my frame.

Late hours had their effect on me as well as on men, yet so imperative is habit, and, in some cases, so inordinate is pride, that I had rather ramble at midnight through the heavy, deserted streets of the metropolis than have sought companionship with the Lord Mayor's coach, even though it had proffered me a welcome in its warm and comfortable house.

Frequently, ah! how frequently, have I tottered along during the long, cold nights, my head shaking, and threatening to separate at every motion I encountered, while my wheels rolled heavily, with difficulty retaining their axles. It was on a similar occasion, while slowly sauntering up the Haymarket, one wet, drizzling night, or rather morning, for it was past two o'clock, I was called by a female, who demanded to be driven home. She was decked in tattered and tawdry finery, and, what with fatigue, and recent indulgence in something more potent than water, she exhibited a wretched and most disgusting specimen of her sex.

Faint, yet how faint, were the traces of beauty discernable on that pallid face; yet it was impossible I could be mistaken in the supposition that I had seen her before, for, on stepping up my now crazy steps, the full glare of the street-lamp fell upon her cheeks, and I beheld my Brighton mistress, the deceived and the betrayed. What had been the sufferings of the suffering wife—the innocent victim of her husband's cruelty, when supported by conscious rectitude—compared with what I then looked on? But I will not harrow up feelings by describing the degraded guilt, the hopeless anguish, that was then the lot of that lost girl. Suffice it to say, I felt relief when she quitted me at her own threshold, and, for my part, I never saw her more.

I am now on my last spokes. I broke down, Thursday week, in the Strand, and dislocated the shoulder of a rich old maid. I cannot help thinking she deserved the visitation, for, as she stepped into me in Oxford-street, she exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by all neighbouring pedestrians, "Dear me, how dirty! I never was in a hackney conveyance before;" though I well remember having frequently been favoured with her

company. A medical gentleman happened to be passing at the moment of our mishap: it was my old Æsculapian master. He set the limb: and so skilfully did he manage his patient that it is more than probable he will be richly rewarded, which recompense, I trust, will shoulder him into a good property at last.

"Two evenings since, I was the bearer of a real party of pleasure to Astley's,—a bride and bridegroom, with the mother of the bride. It was not difficult to recognize the widow of the old rector, whose thin daughter—by the bye, she is not so *now*—had the good luck to marry the only son of a wealthy, though humble, pair."

The voice suddenly ceased; I awoke; the door opened; the steps were let down; I paid the coachman double the amount of his fare: and in future, whenever I stand in need of a Jarvey, I shall certainly make a point of calling for number 100, if, indeed, it has not been broken up and converted into firewood long since, to make room for its more modern and less unwieldy successors.

IRISH BALLAD.

THE DEAD DAUGHTER.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

The moon is shining brightly,
 On thy cold grave, my child!
 And thy father's tears are flowing,
 And his plaints are sad and wild:
 Thy smile was all the sunshine
 That warmed my life's decay;
 But now that smile has vanished,
 My soul would pass away.

To soothe a father's sorrows,
 You braved the stormy sea,
 And left a lover, darling!
 And *all*, to comfort *me*:

I saw thy young bloom wither,
Beneath this chilling sky,
But hope still fondly whispered,
My darling would not die.

O Erin / land of sorrow !
What blighted hearts are thine !
What holy ties are broken
At thy life-destroying shrine !
Thy children, forced to leave thee,
Seek homes beyond the wave,
To lay their dearest treasures,
Like *mine*, within the grave.

JUDON'S GROUND.

BY C. A. M. W., AUTHORESS OF "EVANGEL THE ARTIST," ETC., ETC.

"——time consecrates ;
And what is grey with age becomes religion."

"——He who binds
His soul to knowledge, steals the key of heaven ;
But 'tis a bitter mockery that the fruit
May hang within his reach, and when with thirst
Wrought to a maddening frenzy, he would taste—
It burns his lip to ashes."

"I did hear you talk, far above singing !
After you were gone, I grew acquainted with my heart,
And searched what stirred it so :
Alas ! I found it love."

Those who possess veneration for ancient things, are well acquainted, if not personally, at least by description, with the many beautiful ruins of old abbeys, castles, and monastic remains dispersed about our land ; with the noble mansions of past centuries, such as Penshurst, Haddon Hall, and a hundred others equally noted and interesting. But there are obscure and un-

known dwellings, hidden in common villages, in corners and by-places, which might prove curious to the antiquary, were details of their history and vicinity explored.

In a straggling, and by no means picturesque village, situated near a fine river flowing through a richly wooded country, there is still to be seen a tall grey house, containing about twenty apartments; ten of which are spacious and lofty, the remainder being of more moderate dimensions.

The windows are ill-placed, small, and lattice-paned; the carved oak staircase, wide and grand; the passages narrow, and the rooms leading in and out of each other, until a stranger might be fairly puzzled and entangled in the labyrinth.

The entrance door of this dwelling is extremely massive, and enters directly from the heart of the principal village thoroughfare; it has a dismal front aspect, whereon the sun never rests, no tree or refreshment of any kind relieving the blank appearance of the damp looking walls, with their queer little holes for windows; it is an uninteresting domicile to the mere cursory passer by, and few indeed *do* pass that way, for the village leads to nowhere in particular, and is quite an out-of-the-way place. Once, so tradition sayeth, it was a market town, and the road before this old house passed another way, much further off; fields and gardens had been before it, even as at the present time they exist behind; *there* it has a sunny aspect, and the orchard trees are huge and lichen-covered, bounding extensive and quaintly fashioned gardens; an old battered stone cross is still to be seen in the midst, standing by a fountain; there is a rude inscription on this cross, and it is called, "Judon's Fountain," and the house and its surrounding pleasant adjuncts, still bear the name of "Judon's Ground." There is an authenticated, though fanciful tale attached to this domain, which probably not a dozen persons ever heard.

A few years ago a Christmas party were assembled beneath the hospitable roof, and the animated hostess, a charming old lady of seventy-five, produced credentials and manuscripts musty and moth-eaten, to certify that which she related. The narrative was suggested by an interlude varying the domestic harmonies, of quizzing a young lady present as a "Blue Stocking," she having translated a Latin inscription, and deciphered the letters on "Judon's Fountain." She vehemently disclaimed the title, but her doom was inevitable; so the joke and the laugh went round, and the conversation turned from personal bantering to general discussion. Antiquities were descanted on; from the stone cross in the garden, they came to the house, from the house to its by-gone history, from the history to their kind hostess, and she to her good oak chest. By dint of memory, spelling

at *this*, and putting *that* together, the following memorial was drawn out by an individual of the merry company, and pronounced tolerably correct.

Some hundred years ago, Layamon, the zealous priest, made a pilgrimage wide through the land, in search of materials with which to compile a "boc," or records concerning "Britain's origin; he had succeeded in finding the Latin MS. of "St. Albin and St. Austin," and the "Brut d'Angleterre," of Wace; but he had not yet found the English "Boc," made by St. Bede on this subject. So onwards he toiled through dark forests, over dreary hills and open downs, and crossing swollen rivers, during the course of his journeyings, visiting rich abbeys, rummaging out their records and parchments, and gloating over the riches contained therein; resting in the baronial halls, and in the iron bound coffers of many a vaulted chamber, patiently day by day bringing to light strange old scraps and writings. Could but one of such now, come into the possession of any one of the learned Antiquarian Societies, what a rare prize it would be!

At length the good priest reached fair Ernley Manor, adjoining to Rudstone, for he had gained scent of the treasure he sought, though dimly shadowed forth in obscure hints. Change had been busy at Ernley, the aged Lord was just dead, and dying childless, the estates had descended to a distant branch of the family, in the person of a young man, a mighty hunter and fowler, who had not long arrived to take possession.

The late Lord's two orphan nieces who had always resided with their uncle, (ladies, whose fame for learning and rare erudition had spread far and wide, and was considered marvellous in that age,) on his demise quitted their luxurious home, for a far humbler one provided by his thoughtful care and bounty. A "cell at the neighbouring Radstone, with its plentiful fields and orchards, dependent on Radstone Abbey, was settled upon them for ever, the elder of the two ladies having expressed her determination of taking religious vows, when death parted them from their benefactor. These "cells" were little establishments which rose up like offsets round monasteries, often consisting of from two to half-a-dozen individuals, placed there by the superiors, and living under monastic rule; either that they might be on the spot for the protection or cultivation of property belonging to the abbey, or because they desired to lead a more solitary life than they would do in a large community—or because those who had given certain property, had made it a condition that the holy sisters should be settled on the spot, beneath the wings of the abbey convent, as in the present instance.

Previous to the sisters leaving Ernley Manor for their new habitation, the heir had politely requested to know if there was

ought he could do for their comfort or interests; if there was anything they desired to take with them to their future home; any articles loved from association, or from their own especial value, were generously and sincerely urged upon them.

The young lord of Ernley was a gallant looking gentleman, and if not quite so chivalrous and refined in bearing as his predecessor, his heart was kindly, if his ways were rougher; he was considerate in the extreme towards the orphan sisters, especially towards the youngest, Mistress Mildred.

Judon, the elder of the twain, was by nearly a score of years her sister's senior, and as opposite in disposition as in outward appearance. With a forbidding physiognomy, and masculine gait, she combined masculine attainments and a repulsive, dogmatical manner of expressing herself; added to which, she was both bigoted and selfish.

"Can it be possible," thought the Lord of Ernley, as he gazed on Mildred, whose beautiful countenance, gentle bearing, and winsome laughed, form so strong a contrast to the harshness of Mistress Judon, "that this lovely girl is a mere book-worm, as her sister says—careless of all things save transcribing and gaining knowledge?" For Mistress Judon ever classed her sister with herself; she always spoke of "our studies," "our doings;" of the innumerable "bocs" indited, the illuminated folios got through. For although the power of multiplication in those ages was of course very different to that which now exists; yet as regards those books which were considered as the standard works in secular and sacred literature, the difference was not so *extreme* as many suppose. Writing was then a business, one generally taken up by choice, and pursued with a degree of zeal and indefatigable perseverance, which in the present day seems almost incredible. An account is preserved in Bavaria of a nun, whose labours in the writing way appear almost supernatural—she wrote with her own hand so many volumes, in a most minute and legible character, both for divine service and for the public library of the monastery, which are enumerated in a list written by herself, far too voluminous to be inserted here. But to return to the ladies of Ernley. It seemed probable they were emulating this learned nun, for their midnight lamp and deep research went far to prove the truth of the case, as well as the pale cheek and drooping head of the fair Mildred. Thus, when the Lord of Ernley besought their favour and grace, to honour him by selecting any choice relics, his fears were confirmed, when after long delay, Mistress Mildred signified her desire to possess a certain iron coffer, containing MSS., invaluable to the learned and lovers of antiquity, while Mistress Judon named as *her* choice her deceased

angle's favourite dog, Rover. The sportsman would willingly have given gold, or silver, or aught else, in lieu of the sagacious creature; but Judon was deaf to hints, and Mildred stood by with a mute tongue and downcast eyes. Yet it was upon *her* that Rover fawned; it was *her* hands he licked; it was *her* retreating form he ever watched with loving eyes, while of his new owner, Mistress Judon, he took no notice whatever.

"Methinks," said the lord of Ernley, "the choice of the ladies ought to be reversed: the punishments for Mistress Judon, and the faithful spaniel for the fair Mildred."

"Not so, my lord," eagerly answered the elder sister; "the well-merited fame of Mildred of Ernley sure deserves a reward in kind."

"And does Mistress Mildred really *like* her occupations?" somewhat anxiously rejoined the young lord. "Her cheek is paler than it ought to be for one so young and beautiful."

"My sister, sir, is naturally studious; her vocation is a holy one, and the rare talents with which she is endowed are devoted to the service of heaven, and to the enlightenment of her less favoured fellow-mortals."

So saying, Mistress Judon closed the conference, and the house at Radstone received the ladies of Ernley Manor, who were considered in their probation, or year's novitiate, prior to taking formal vows, as members of Radstone community. After awhile, rumours were abroad, which whispered of Mistress Mildred's failing health; and a skilful leech having been consulted, who prescribed freedom from her arduous toils, and plenty of air and exercise.

And thus matters were when the good priest Layamon came to Ernley in search of the MSS. he desired, much disappointed when he found they had been carried away in the iron coffer by Mistress Mildred; so in haste he made his way to the cell at Radstone, promising a speedy return to the hospitable manor: for the present lord's father had been an early friend of Layamon's, and the worthy man loved the son for the father's sake. Great honour was paid to the learned father by Mistress Judon, and much he marvelled at the profuse and delicate penmanship displayed to his admiring gaze, as the sole production of the youthful Mildred's hands. To her he applied for permission to search in the iron coffer for the valuable record of St. Bede; but she turned so blushing away from the good man, looking towards her sister, who in her turn became confused, that Layamon somewhat sternly said,—

"My daughters, wherefore this hesitation? Are ye unwilling to open the treasures of thy house for the use of the church and of posterity?"

"Not so, most reverend father," exclaimed the dismayed Judon; "but, truth to tell, the chest and its contents are *mine*, for I was guilty of a deception—an innocent one, I hope, as the end may justify the means."

"What is this thou sayest, daughter?" answered the reprov-
er. "Deception or equivocation can never be justified, however good the end to be gained may appear. Let me hear what thou hast done."

"I desired Mildred to name this iron coffer as her choice, when it was mine, father. Long she refused to comply with my commands, saying it was not true, and she durst not speak falsely; but I over-ruled her objections, and claimed for myself the dumb brute, which in reality belongs to Mildred, and was her dearest choice."

"And what motive hadst thou, daughter, for so foolish a falsity?"

"I desired to establish Mildred's fame for erudition, and to screen her from the imputation of folly. *My* years, and *my* reputation," proudly added Mistress Judon, "were a sufficient preservation for *me*."

She did not add that she had well marked the lord of Ernley's admiring gaze fixed on the gentle Mildred; nor did she add her selfish wish to secure her sister's valuable services, on the bigot's plea of conventual happiness. She had early discovered the heir's aversion, nay, positive antipathy, to "learned women" of that age, and, to ward off the approach of so dangerous a suitor, she had determined to environ her young sister with the obnoxious characteristics.

But although Mistress Judon did not say all this, Layamon knew it, for he was a wise and subtle man, and read men's hearts as easily as their parchments; and it grieved him to see the poor, toil-worn girl's wasted form and hectic colour. But he contented himself with mildly reprehending Mistress Judon, and advising truth, at all times, and on all occasions, to be strictly adhered to.

Mildred could have told him how delicious an elysium she had of late enjoyed; how far dearer and sweeter were the lonely woods, the verdant fields, and the violets among the moss, beneath the old oak trees, than all the gorgeous ornaments of vellum, or the charms of black-lettering.

But there was one who knew this, almost as well as she did herself; for the lord of Ernley had marked her unseen, as she gratefully inhaled the fresh, pure breezes of the hill-side or sought the shadow of the woodlands; and as he watched, he felt certain that she was a lover of nature, and nature's child; no mere book-worm and blind devotee, but a simple being,

with a loving heart, learned and gifted, as she most assuredly was ; it must be remembered also, that Mildred's beauty had made a deep impression on his heart, and he earnestly desired to find his ideas confirmed.

When he heard the truth respecting the iron coffer from Layamon, on the latter's return to Ernley in high spirits, (having found the MS. he was in search of, in Judon's chest ;) and when he also heard Layamon's comments thereon, the secret of his heart was revealed, and to that venerable friend the Lord of Ernley confided his hopes and fears. Mildred was a timid creature, unaccustomed to dispute her sister's wishes ; the maiden's heart must be won, Judon's consent gained, and the church propitiated, but there is and was then, an old saying, that "where there is a will there is a way."

Perhaps the Lord of Ernley, knowing Mistress Judon's weak point, found his way more freely to her favour, by an order which he forthwith issued for a copy of the Scriptures, to exceed in magnificence and decoration all other attempts of the kind yet made, and to be conducted under her superintendence ; for centuries, that illuminated folio was to be seen at Ernley Manor, and it was called the "Radstone Manuscript ;" but the ancient site of that mansion is scarcely now to be traced, Radstone Abbey is almost a levelled ruin, and the "cell" at Radstone still bearing the name of "Judon's Ground," is all that remains to certify this tale of past generations. It is believed, that the present tall, grey house is erected on the foundations of that identical cell, and that the cellars, and an underground passage are the very same as in days of yore ; therein a singular stone receptacle was discovered by the present owner, containing many valuable documents, some of which proved the domicile now standing to be at least five hundred years old.

Certain it is also, that a copy of St. Bede's "Boc," rarely and delicately written, and superbly illuminated, was formerly reckoned among the curiosities of Ernley, and authenticated as the work of "Ladye Mildred, wife of the lord of the manor ;" there was also a monument extant in the chapel, erected to this lady's memory, which spoke of her (to render a translation) as a "pious, learned, and accomplished lady, a perfect wife, and an excellent mother."

May we not fancy the happy Mildred exerting all her skill to embellish this copy of St. Bede, for had not the good Layamon come on his pilgrimage to Ernley, in search of the MS., would she ever have been the beloved wife of its lordly owner ?

"May we not fancy her winsome laugh ?" added our pleasant hostess of "Judon's Ground ;" "may we not fancy her saying,

'I am much beholden to the venerable Bede, I trow ; but, after all, I repent not my choice of dear old Hector ! so never mind quizzing, my dear,' turning to the Blue Stocking of the party, 'for, believe me, a *really* clever and sensible man has no objection to a learned wife, provided she unites always the qualities of affection, gentleness, and *thrift in all things*—a rare combination, I confess !'

BALLAD.

THE POET'S FIRST LOVE.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

OH ! she was beautiful when first we met
In life's young hours, when love is all for yet,
Save the bright phantasies deep feeling weaves
Around the trusting heart that all believes.
She was the guardian angel of my dreams ;
She gave my waking thoughts their brightest themes ;
And time, that blighted other things to me,
Left my lone heart its deep fidelity.

Yes ! she was beautiful when first we met,
And still, though mine no more, she seems so yet :
For I have loved her through the changing years ;
For her in secret wept my saddest tears.
My soul's devotion time can ne'er impair,
Nor fade the image fondly pictured there ;
And, though all other things have changed to me,
My heart still keeps its deep fidelity.

THE BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

BEAUTIFUL spirit! beautiful spirit!

Ah! what is thy mission, and whence art thou come?
 Art thou sent from the land that immortals inherit,
 To call me away to the weary one's home?
 Oh, say! did some *loved one*, now resting in heaven,
 Remember me still in that region of light?
 Has the power to the mother that bore me been given,
 To watch o'er her child in the silence of night?

Beautiful spirit! vision of glory!

Am I dreaming?—or art thou a herald of light,
 Like those angels of old, that we read of in story,
 That kept their sweet watch o'er earth's sleepers by night?
 Oh, speak to me! Tell me of Him, the Immortal—
 The never created, yet ever to be.
 With the light of His grace, pierce my soul's darkened portal,
 And pour the bright rays of His mercy on me.

Beautiful spirit! I see thee no longer:

Like the soft moon, that fadeth before the young day,
 It fled, ere the light of the morning grew stronger.
 And so would *my* soul from this earth pass away.
 Could it join that bright angel that came to my slumber,
 And meet *all it loves* in the regions of bliss?
 Ah! who with earth's cares would the spirit encumber,
 Or linger out life in a world such as this?

THE LOVE OF GOD.

TRANSLATION FROM THE PROVENÇAL OF BERNARD RASCAS,

BY WILLIAM CULLIN BRYANT.

ALL things that are on earth shall wholly pass away,
 Except the love of God, which shall live and last for
 aye.

The forms of men shall be as they had never been ;
 The blasted groves shall loose their fresh and tender
 green ;

The birds of the thickets shall end their pleasant
 song,

And the nightingale shall cease to chant the evening
 long.

The kine of the pasture shall feel the dart that kills,
 And all the fair white flocks shall perish from the
 hills.

The goat and antler'd stag, the wolf and the fox,
 The wild-boar of the wood, and the chamois of the
 rocks,

And the strong and fearless bear, in the trodden dust
 shall lie ;

And the dolphin of the sea, and the mighty whale,
 shall die.

And realms shall be dissolved, and empires be no
 more,

And they shall bow to death, who ruled from shore
 to shore ;

And the great globe itself (so the holy writings tell),
 With the rolling firmament, where the starry armies
 dwell,

Shall melt with fervent heat—they shall all pass away,
 Except the love of God, which shall live and last for
 aye.

CLARENDON;

A NOVEL.

BY WILLIAM DODSWORTH, ESQ.

CHAPTER XXXVI.*

WE left the villain Rudd, to all appearance, dead in the thievesden at Dover, from which Herbert, as we have seen, so providentially escaped. Alarmed by the uproar, the old bloated landlady had hurried upstairs, accompanied by a trusty emissary with a huge patch over one eye, and a broken nose, whom she designated by the name of Black Dick; and who no sooner saw the prostrate and, apparently, lifeless form of Rudd, than he immediately raised it into a sitting posture, and then, with more rapidity than gentleness, untied his neckerchief, tore open his coat, and threw a quantity of cold water upon his face. This treatment saved the rascal's life; and in a short time, Rudd opened his eyes and gasped for breath.

"What cheer, messmate? you were as near as maybe slipping stays, and setting off on a voyage for Deadman's Sound," growled Black Dick, with a gruff laugh. "Mother Punshon, if the poor sinner had a drop o' gin, he might stand a better chance."

"Ay! and who's to pay me for that?" muttered the old hag, surlily, as she glanced disdainfully at the miserable attire Rudd wore.

"I can," whispered Rudd, haughtily.

"Oh, then, I've no objection at all," rejoined the hostess, more graciously, as she strode towards the door. "I will send it in a moment."

"Send two," said Rudd, in a louder voice; "I owe this good fellow one."

"And mind they be full glasses, mother," cried Black Dick, as a parting hint. "Can you stand, my hearty?"

* Continued from page 99, vol. lvi.

"I'll try, at any rate," said Rudd, staggering to his feet. "Where is the other man and the boy?"

"Far enough off by this, I'll warrant," rejoined his companion, significantly. "Why, didn't he attempt to throttle you?"

"Hell's curses on him! he did," growled Rudd, fiercely. "He caught me at an advantage, or he never could have done it; but I'll pay him off tenfold, yet. But the boy! the boy! oh, I wouldn't have lost him to have found a fortune."

"Your son, maybe?"

"No matter what he was," retorted the other, scowling; "and at such a time, too!"

He threw himself at full length down upon the bed, and lay in moody silence until the liquor arrived, carried by a dirty slipshod girl, who leered on Black Dick most impudently as she gave him his share.

"Mistress said it would be paid for," she said, eyeing Rudd with a cold, keen eye.

Rudd threw her a shilling. "Pay her, and keep the change," he said; and, drinking the burning liquid off at a draught, he raised himself up and began to think again.

The other man, in the meanwhile, was eyeing him with furtive interest from beneath his shaggy brows. He was of a very swarthy complexion, and had shaggy black hair and bushy whiskers which met under his throat, and, added to a pair of piercing black eyes, and something lawless and daring in his manner, gave him a very formidable and cut-throat appearance.

"You've been on the road, neighbour, if I'm not very much mistaken," said he, after a long pause.

Rudd started, and eyed him keenly for a full minute or more before he replied.

"What makes you think that?" he inquired, at last, with a laugh.

"Oh, one can tell that at a glance. The 'Freemen' never carry themselves like other people. Your poor tramp, for instance, is a very different fellow from a jolly pad or a jarvie."

"And so you think I am not a tramp, eh?" continued Rudd, surveying him with renewed interest.

"I'm certain on't, for I've been one myself; I know the tricks of the trade. Dy'e want a helping hand?"

"Perhaps I do. Which road have you travelled, friend?"

"Oh, I generally took the north circuit, from York to Newcastle; but I got into trouble at the latter place a year or so ago, and hav'n't ventured into my old haunts since. I know this beat very well; and if you choose to let each go halves—"

"Could you get a disguise if I found the money for it?"

"Easily: I know a shop where they sell all those kind of things, and could pick you up almost any thing you wanted."

"I would like a countryman's dress, for it would excite least attention down in the part we are going to. But we'll talk more about the matter in the morning. What's your name, friend?"

"Dick Bayles is my real name; but I get Black Dick generally, I'm so very black," and he laughed. "That's an ugly scar you've got on your cheek."

Rudd winced, and said in a tone of concentrated rage, "Yes, I got that in a hand-to-hand fight with a foster-brother of mine, called Dalton. I was as pretty a man of my inches as you could see before that —"

"But you paid him off for it, didn't you?" demanded Bayles, eagerly.

"I will do so one of these days, I hope," rejoined the other, savagely: "yes, I promise him, when next we meet, that I shall have a reckoning for that and a few more injuries besides."

"Do you know where he is now?" inquired Bayles, as he leisurely undressed himself, whilst Rudd sat on his bed, apparently determined to save himself the trouble of such an act.

"In Paris."

"Bosh! that's a long way off, pal."

"It is: I was going there with the boy, but now it's useless."

"Then why not search for the lad: he can't have run far already, one would think."

Rudd foamed at the mouth with baffled rage. "It is too late now," he said, in a tone of despair.

"Had you been long in company with the rascal?"

"Only two or three days. From the first I mistrusted him, he was such a white-livered rascal, and showed such a sneaking kindness for the whelp. As long as I kept possession of the brat, I punished twenty people that I hated with all my heart. There was Dalton, and his brother, a man that was left guardian to him, and—but no matter! he has escaped from my clutches; but woe be to him if he ever falls into them again!"

He then drew the bed-clothes about him, and presently pretended to be fast asleep. His companion was some time in undressing, and even after he had extinguished the candle, sat for half-an-hour or more on the stock of his bed, revolving in his mind all that his new associate had told him. At length, he aroused himself, and crept stealthily into bed, and was soon asleep.

Rudd moaned and muttered repeatedly during his sleep, which was evidently disturbed by some painful dreams. His companion, however, did not awake, for he was a very heavy

sleepers, and when once fairly unconscious, it required no slight disturbance to arouse him. Towards morning Rudd awoke, with the perspiration streaming from every pore, although the night was chilly. His dreams had appalled even his stout heart, and for several minutes he vainly strove to remember where he was. At length, recollection returned. He sat up in bed, and listened to the calm, regular breathing of his companion.

"He must only be a new hand, or he could not sleep so soundly as that," he thought, as his mind recurred to his own fearful visions, from which he was just aroused; and then he threw himself back again upon the bed, and, closing his eyes, attempted to sleep again.

When his new confederate awoke, he was up and dressed.

"Hallo! there, you make an early start, my good fellow," was Bayles's good-humoured salutation, as he began to dress himself. "How long have you been up?"

"Not long," rejoined the other, sullenly. "I didn't rest well, and so got up, and put on my clothes: as soon as we have had some breakfast, we will go to this shop you were speaking about, and choose a disguise."

"Ay, for you, if you like: I fancy I'm not well enough known down in the parts we're going to, to need one."

"All the better, if you are not; I wish I could say as much; however, if we only get something that will suit at the shop, I defy the devil himself to recognise me. You're a slow dresser, Bayles."

"Why, yes, I am rather: it's a bit of my nature, I think," said the other, laughing.

Rudd did not reply, but began to pace the room with hasty strides, for he was beginning to get impatient; fortunately for Mr. Bayles, the latter soon completed his toilet, and then led the way down stairs to a little dark den, in which breakfast was already prepared for two.

Coarse bread, broiled red herrings, and tea, were the staple of the meal. The close, confined, dingy hole, for you could not call it a room, reeked with the mingled smell of stale tobacco and the coarse rankness of the fish: the two men ate like famished wolves, and were waited upon by the sluttish Hebe who had brought them the liquor on the previous night.

"There was a man drowned last night, Bayles, on the *Hard*," she said in a cold, callous tone, as she brought in a reinforcement of the herrings. "They're going to sit upon him in an hour or so."

"A man! what kind of a man, Jess?" inquired Bayles, carelessly, as he swallowed his tea.

"Oh, how should I know! they were carrying the corpse up stairs, abit ago; it quite gave me a turn."

"You're such a feeling hussey, Jess," rejoined the man, with a sneering laugh. "There hasn't been any foul play, has there?"

"I know nothing but what I've told you," retorted the woman, with a toss of her slovenly head. "They've laid it on the table up stairs in the billiard room till the jury comes, and you can go and look for yourself if you are curious."

"Pshaw! I hate dead bodies," growled Bayles, with a look of ineffable disgust.

"I should like to see it," interposed Rudd, for the first time looking up; "I like to see dead bodies."

Bayles involuntarily retreated from him as he said this.

"I like to see how men have died," continued Rudd, speaking in a quick, excited voice. "One man goes out of the world as calmly as if he would waken again to-morrow morning, instead of having to lie and fester in some noisome grave; another takes his last look of life like the sun in a tempest, with every feature distorted by a thousand horrible passions."

"Suppose we go up and see this body—that is, you may; as I will stay outside, until you have seen all you wish—Come!"

"With all my heart!" rejoined Rudd, carelessly; "let us pay the reckoning first, and then we needn't return!" and he rang the bell.

The bill was not a heavy one, and Rudd immediately discharged it; the woman looked hard at the sovereign he gave her, but its ring was true and sound; and she changed it without hesitation.

"You aren't a smasher, I hope?" she said, eyeing him suspiciously.

"No, no, mother!" retorted the man, with a smile. "Come, let's have a kiss, for luck!"

"Get away with you, you impudent dog!—you ought to be ashamed to put on a poor lone woman in such a way!" was her response.

Rudd got the kiss, and gave her a hug into the bargain, that might have squeezed the breath out of a bear, and then followed Bayles into the passage. As they gained the first landing on the staircase, the latter drew up, and in a whisper demanded—

"What, in the name of all that's fortunate, induced you to kiss old, drunken, mother Punshon, in that way? surely, your taste doesn't run on such cattle as that?"

"Why, you see, she asked me a very difficult question; and the only way to get out of the scrape was, to flatter her vanity

a bit," rejoined Rudd, with a laugh. "I saw she rather fancied me, last night, and so the thought saved me."

"Why, wasn't the sovereign good?" inquired Bayles, preparing to ascend again.

"May be, and may be not," rejoined Rudd, carelessly; "how should a man know all that passes through his hands? the money's hard enough to get, to make it too keenly scrutinised when it does come."

"Now, this is the room!" interposed Bayles, throwing open the door of a long, low room, which opened out upon the sea. "You won't be long, I fancy?" and so saying, he sat down upon a bench in the passage, and began to whistle a quick step.

Rudd cast a hurried glance round the room as he advanced into it, and his eye took in, in a moment, the dirty walls and dingy ceiling, the naked benches and billiard-tables, on which the cues were still lying. A torn number of "Bell's Life" lay on the floor, near a spittoon, around which a quantity of broken tobacco-pipes were thrown; a shattered chair or two lay in another corner, as if some drunken squabble had taken place there the night before, contrasting still more strongly with the presence of the corpse.

On a table, in the centre of the room, lay something covered with a dingy yellow sheet. Rudd felt his flesh creep, in spite of all his hardihood, as he found himself so abruptly placed in the companionship of death; but, with a heavy step, he approached, and drew aside the sheet.

He involuntarily started, and drew back. Rigid, and pale, and fixed as those features were, he recognized them only too readily. By some strange accident, they had brought the body of poor Hemp to the very house from which he had fled the previous night, and the man he had attempted to murder now stood over his own senseless corpse; a tide of revengeful feelings swept over the lawless heart of his antagonist, as he once more drew the sheet over the lifeless form, still reeking from its fatal plunge; and, with a fixed and impenetrable look, he turned from the room, and rejoined his companion.

"Some poor fellow, that has been sick of the world," he said, carelessly, as he strode down stairs; "he makes a pretty corpse enough, too, poor wretch!"

"Did you ever see him before?" demanded Bayles, perfectly unconscious of the connexion there had been between the two men. "It wasn't the villain that attempted to throttle you, last night, was it?"

Rudd darted a keen, inquisitive look at his new ally, for a moment, as if he felt that the latter had suspected who the

dead man really was ; but Bayles looked so unconscious, that he felt re-assured, and only answered, coldly,—

“ I never saw the man before, to my knowledge.”

They were already at the door. Bayles looked up and down the street for a moment, in a peculiar manner ; then darted rapidly across, closely followed by Rudd, who was as fleet of foot, and almost as stealthy, as a greyhound. Bayles then plunged into the first narrow alley they came to, and ran rapidly forward, with his head ducked down, until they had placed mother Punshon's a good quarter of a mile behind them, and then relaxing his pace, suffered Rudd to overtake him.

“ Walk quietly, now, for a bit, and we will soon be there,” he said, in a low tone, and he fell into a lounging walk, which Rudd imitated to the letter.

After threading innumerable lanes, each a dirty facsimile of its predecessor, they stopped, at last, at a house, from the broken and dilapidated windows of which dangled various articles of wearing attire.

“ What disguise do you mean to assume ?” inquired Bayles, pausing on the threshold.

“ Oh, a sailor will suit me famously,” rejoined his companion, with a gruff laugh ; “ only lead on, and let us get out of this place as quick as we can.”

Bayles complied, and presently ushered him into a very spacious but very low apartment, dimly lit with two narrow windows, through the half-glazed casements of which the light fought its way ; a few disreputable looking people, thieves that had plundered sick men's deathbeds, or had pilfered from hedge-rows and out-houses the property of the honest and the unwary, were chaffering over a pile of dirty clothes, with the owner and his people, who drove quite as hard a bargain as the best of the lot.

“ We want some kind of an outfit, master,” said Bayles, who had kept in the background until the proprietor of the establishment was at liberty.

“ In what style, my man ?” demanded the latter, eyeing the two men from head to foot as he stood opposite to them. “ We have all sorts ; honest mechanics, struggling tradesmen, tailors, sailors, ruined peasants jockies ; the tradesman or the peasant is the most popular, and brings—of course the best price,” he added, with a coarse laugh.

“ I am afraid neither of us would suit the character,” rejoined Bayles, echoing his laugh.

“ Why, no, you both look too much like kempen coves for that, my bullies,” was the response—“ this gentleman,” tapping

Rudd upon the shoulder, "would make a famous shipwrecked sailor; have you anything of a voice, my hearty?"

In reply, Rudd chaunted a stave of "The Bay of Biscay," that made the very walls ring again.

"That will do famously; why, you'll make your fortune in a twinkling," cried the delighted clothesman. "You must go on as a sailor and try your luck: do you know any songs of that sort?"

"Oh, plenty," responded Rudd, winking at Bayles to keep quiet; "I was reckoned a capital singer in my youth, and learnt all those songs whenever I heard them; have you a sailor's rig-out that would fit me?"

"Why, you are *rather* out of the common size," replied the shopkeeper, eyeing Rudd's herculean proportions with a critical eye, "but we will see what we can do; just step this way;" and he led them through a low door into a very dark passage, which opened into another large apartment, better lighted than the former, and quite as spacious.

The spectacle it presented was really a curious one. On every side were piled high masses—for we can call them nothing else—of half worn clothes, formed of many bundles; each bundle contained a complete suit, down to the neckerchief and stockings, on which the price was labelled. Advancing to the farthest corner, the clothesman began to examine the different suits of which it was composed, until he came upon one which he desired Rudd to try on. The latter complied, and his companions immediately declared it to be an excellent fit, and the price being found suitable, it was immediately paid for, and the men left the shop by a different door from that by which they entered.

They then adjourned to an adjoining publichouse to talk over their plans, Rudd having now quite abandoned all idea of going to Paris for the present, and here they determined to remain in ambush until the evening, when they would sally forth and get out of Dover as quickly as possible, both the men being for very urgent reasons as anxious to leave as our readers will give them credit for.

After dinner Rudd proposed that they should lie down for a few hours, and Bayles assenting, they were shown to a room in which were a couple of dirty couches; having barricaded the door, each took one, and Rudd at any rate was soon fast asleep.

At night the landlord called them, and Rudd having paid their score, the brace of worthies sallied forth upon their adventures. The first plunge was anything but inviting, for the rain was falling in torrents, and there was a keen, biting wind that racked them to the very bones; shivering and trembling at

every blast, at one moment cursing the rain, and at the next imprecating their unlucky fortunes that had driven them out at such a time, Rudd and his companion started along the ill-lit and ill-paved streets until they were fairly clear of the town and the country opened upon them; the change, however, was scarcely an improvement, for slushy lanes and miry fields were not one whit better than sloppy streets and dripping pent-houses; such as it was, however, they would not now turn back, but continued to trudge wearily on, until at length the storm, as if commiserating their misery, suddenly ceased, and the moon shone out with watery brightness from behind a dense bank of clouds.

And at the same moment a confused noise, quickly followed by a piercing cry, burst upon their ears, which instantly brought them both to a halt. The next moment the cry was repeated if possible in a still shriller tone, evidently from some one beyond them upon the road; and, scarcely knowing what they were doing, the two men ciapped their hats tightly on their heads, and rushed forward at the top of their speed.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE first to reach the spot was Rudd, who perceived in the moonlight a travelling carriage lying overturned in the middle of the road, with the horses plunging violently and entangled in the traces. A groan from the road side showed sufficiently well the condition of the unfortunate postilion, who was in fact insensible, and was lying where he had been thrown when the accident happened.

Rudd, with the assistance of Bayles, who now came up, cut the traces and released the struggling cattle, and then, not without great difficulty, dragged an old lady, whose groans and lamentations were really heartrending, out of the window, and placed her on the roadside.

"She's badly hurt, poor thing," said Bayles, who was not without a spark of pity in his composition. "What is to be done now, comrade?—What a groan!" he added, as the unfortunate traveller moaned afresh.

"Do! why take whatever fortune gives us," growled Rudd, in whose cruel breast avarice and plunder always conquered pity, and who was too much inured to his lawless calling to care about a few groans and screams. "D'ye think the jarvie is likely to come about again?"

"No, no, poor devil, he has got his quietus," rejoined the other, carelessly.

"If I thought he would, I'd soon settle his business," muttered the villain with a sneer. "Just you stand sentry, Bayles, over the old'un, whilst I rifle the chaise; here goes," and he strode out into the road again and approached the carriage.

An exclamation of surprise distracted Bayles's attention from the old lady, who was sitting rocking herself to and fro, moaning to herself as if in great bodily pain, and he perceived Rudd in the act of lifting some one else out of the vehicle, and running up, he saw another female in his arms.

The moonlight was strong enough to show her features, which were lovely in the extreme, although of a marble paleness, for she had fainted; a rich mass of dark hair was thrown back from a forehead as white as alabaster; the eyes were closed, and the exquisitely chiselled mouth was rigidly set as if life had already deserted its beautiful dwelling; a brutal exclamation from Rudd, and a laugh from his associate saluted this new discovery and the young lady being placed beside her more conscious and noisy companion, the two men began to rifle the chaise, without bestowing a thought upon its owners.

They were still thus engaged when the young lady recovered from her swoon; and raising herself feebly up, saw enough to make her close her eyes and wish herself insensible again.

"Oh dear! dear!" murmured the old lady, wringing her hands with feeble helplessness, "I shall never survive this frightful night. Oh dear, how numb my side feels! Eleanor, love!"

The young lady strove to sit up, although the very earth seemed to swim around her.

"Eleanor, child!" again cried the old lady.

With an effort that almost threw her back into her swoon again, the young lady staggered to her feet, and knelt down on the wet ground beside her companion.

"Are you much hurt—very much hurt?" she whispered with a hurried terror of accent that added to her touching beauty.

"I shall never recover it, child," rejoined the old lady, feebly. "I have had a stroke, love, and have lost my side."

"Oh, madam, the terror and the accident together have benumbed you," said the other, sweetly. "If we could only get to some house, and have the benefit of a fire and a bath, you would be quite yourself again in the morning."

The old lady groaned and shook her head, for she knew too truly that such comfort was not for her.

"Those men are plundering the carriage, child," she whispered after a pause, during which the oaths of Rudd and the

laughter of Bayles were plainly audible, as they rummaged the poor old battered vehicle.

"What can we do?" murmured the young one, with all the calmness of despair; "the poor postboy is insensible, if not dying."

"We are only two poor women," rejoined the other in the same calm tone. "Hush! do you hear a horse galloping? your ears, child, are younger than mine."

"If it should be McGraw!" said the young lady, as a gleam of hope for a moment illuminated her beautiful countenance. "He has had time to be here with Williams by this."

They listened; alas! it was but an illusion. The wind moaned drearily across the watery waste of moor around them; but no approaching clatter of horse or foot proclaimed succour to be at hand.

The young lady sighed, and taking off her mantle drew it across the shoulders of her aged companion.

"Oh, my child, how wickedly I have behaved to you!" sobbed the old lady, forgetting the broken chaise and dying postboy, her own forlorn situation, and the lawless wretches who were plundering her effects so near at hand. "I have done very wickedly, my child, towards you; but, please God, if I survive this night I will atone, as far as possible, for all."

At this moment Rudd, having rifled the carriage, took it into his head to come and see if there was anything on the persons of its possessors. The old lady met his gaze with a bearing so lofty and commanding, that the robber was for a moment staggered; and at this juncture her companion, drawing her purse from her pocket, thrust it, not without a shudder, into his hand, whispering, as she did so,—

"There, there, take that! it is all we have; and for God's sake spare her. She is very old, and badly hurt, and the least violence would kill her. It is really all."

Rudd weighed it in his hand, and held it up in the moonlight until he caught the glitter of gold between the meshes.

"And is this really all, my pretty nightingale?" he asked, with a surly laugh, as he thrust it into his pocket. "Have you never a watch to tell the time of day, nor a bracelet?"

"No! no! we never travel with such things. I declare to you, that is all;" and her arms encircled the gaunt, proud form of her fellow traveller, as if a thing so fragile and beautiful could shield it from the stormy passions of the villain before her.

"If you stay here one moment longer," she said, struggling with her tears, "you will probably meet your reward," and, as

she spoke, the clatter of approaching horsemen was distinctly audible.

Rudd swore an oath and leaped into the middle of the road; listened intently for a moment, until he was certain which way the aid was coming, and, calling out for Bayles to follow him, ran off as fast as he could in an opposite direction.

Within a couple of minutes three or four men, mounted on horseback, galloped up.

"What is the matter!" ejaculated the first, dismounting and approaching the chaise. "My Lady Susan?"

"Here, McGraw," cried the stern voice of his mistress from the roadside. "We have met with a sad accident, and have narrowly escaped with our lives, once, if not twice."

"An accident, does your ladyship say!" exclaimed Mr. Duncan McGraw, in his old familiar tones. "And the postboy, and Miss Eleanor!"

"Miss Clarendon, thank God, beyond the fright, is not hurt, although, like myself, she has been robbed," said Lady Susan Clarendon, sternly. "Send Williams forward to get a litter somewhere, and find us shelter for the night."

"A litter, my leddy, and for what?"

"For me, fool!" retorted Lady Susan, with all her usual irritability of manner. "Do you think an old woman like me can be overturned and not feel the effects of it? Williams, ride forward and do what I told you. And you, McGraw, bring the cushion out of the carriage for Miss Clarendon and myself to sit upon; and some shawls as well, if the rascals have left us any."

The footman did as he was bid; and Mr. McGraw, having procured the cushions, seated Lady Susan on one, and then placed the other for his young lady; he then, with the assistance of the remaining man, who was a chance acquaintance picked up upon the road, contrived to place the chaise in its right position again, and then bethought himself of the postboy, whose right leg was found to be broken, in addition to other injuries on different parts of his body.

"This is a very bad business," muttered the Scotch steward, dolorously, as he stood eyeing the battered chaise, while his companion busied himself with endeavouring to put the horses to it again. "It was an ill day when we left Leven, and this to be at the bottom of it a'."

An evil day, indeed, it was. How could it be otherwise, when such men as Jasper Vernon were the ruling spirits of the unfortunate and self-willed Lady Susan, and such men as Mr. Duncan McGraw were the agents by whom her movements were regulated? She had remained in Scotland as long as ever

her terrors would permit her, and was now on her way to seek out Jasper Vernon, and to aid in the discovery of poor little Herbert.

On such a mission Eleanor could scarcely be left behind, and so the pair set off in company, Lady Susan's proud spirit torturing her with the upbraidings of a conscience conscious of the terrible injuries she had inflicted upon the family of her kinsman, and determined to break for ever with her false ally, and to repair, as far as in her lay, the evils she had committed towards Eleanor and her brothers.

Nothing had occurred of an untoward nature until an hour or so before we have thus once more fallen in with them, when, from some cause or other, her ladyship's two attendants were detained upon the road, and the carriage with its two occupants travelled slowly forward to give them time to rejoin it; added to this, the postillion had had a glass or two too much, and the horses were fresh and very unmanageable, so that before very long they fairly ran away with the chaise at a terrific pace, and coming to an abrupt turn of the road the whole were overturned, the driver nearly killed, and Lady Susan, as she termed it, received a stroke which would probably shorten her days. Eleanor alone, fortunately, escaped unhurt, and when she had recovered from the fright, was the same quiet, sensible, unselfish being we have always seen her.

Within half an hour Williams returned with the joyful intelligence that there was a very good inn within half a mile, and that a litter would be despatched from it for Lady Susan at once. There was nothing further to be done, therefore, but to wait as patiently as they could where they were, until this arrived.

Eleanor sat down by the side of her ladyship, whose pale, stern face was distinctly visible by the light of one of the carriage lamps, which the footman had lighted and placed on the road in front of them: at times a convulsive frown would pass across it, betokening, in spite of all her efforts, how keenly she suffered; but more than this, no groan nor complaint escaped her. Lady Susan could be a martyr, at any rate, if she fell short of being a saint.

It seemed hours to Eleanor's impatient imagination before the litter arrived; and when it did arrive, the attendants were so unskilful that one or two smothered groans escaped her ladyship, in spite of all her stoicism. Eleanor was her guardian angel through all; and with Eleanor's hand clasped in her very icy grasp, the old lady travelled slowly and gently to the inn.

A night of suffering succeeded, which Lady Susan bore with

heroic fortitude, and which left Eleanor almost as weak and feeble as the real sufferer herself.

"Go to bed, love! go to bed; for you are scarcely able to stand," murmured Lady Susan, with new-found gentleness, as Eleanor withdrew the curtains, and the grey dawn stole into the room; "Janet can stay with me for a few hours, love."

"But you are still, madam, so very, very ill," whispered Eleanor, stooping, and kissing the feverish forehead. If you will only permit me to stay a little longer, and desire Janet to lie down instead."

Hereupon arose a perfect torrent of refusals from Mrs. Janet, who might have nursed a whole hospital of invalids for a twelve-month without exhibiting any symptoms of fatigue. "She was so used to her ladyship's vagaries, and she wudna lie down, not she! and Miss Clarendon, puir thing, was sae delicate, she couldna stand a sick chaumer like an old smoke-dried hielander like herself—na! na! she was na gaun to forsak her leddy, not she"—and fairly drowned in the old Scotchwoman's eloquence, Eleanor was fain to yield and retire to her own room for a few hours.

She was really so nervous and unhappy that she could not sleep, so, after striving to doze for some time in vain, she got up and dressed herself again, determined this time to force Janet from the sick room in her turn. Lady Susan was reading on her entrance, but put away the book when she heard Eleanor's light footstep in the room. One glance told the latter that it was not the Bible, which her ladyship, I am sorry to say, rarely opened when at Leven.

Her countenance was very much changed; the cheeks had fallen in, and were now quite hollowed, and the bones stood out in hungry prominence; the eyes were hollow, and unnaturally brilliant, with a deep purple circle beneath each. She had grown ten years older in that one night of suffering.

"I have sent Janet to her bed," she said, calmly, extending her hand as she spoke; "kiss me, love."

A tear fell on her forehead as Eleanor obeyed. "It is I that ought to shed tears, child, for you," she said, smiling faintly.

Eleanor looked up, with her sad, sweet smile, into that countenance, which she felt to be stamped with the lineaments of death.

"I have done you much wrong, love," said the old lady, with her *new* gentle voice. "I have been a very wicked woman, Eleanor, and dare not sue for your forgiveness."

"Oh, madam!" gasped Eleanor, falling on her knees at the side of the bed, and bursting into tears, "how can I listen to such self-condemnation from your lips? It is I that ought to sue for forgiveness."

"No, Eleanor, it is not," said Lady Susan, laying her withered hand solemnly on that bright head. "You have been all that is gentle, loving, and kind; and I, alas!"—a groan finished the sentence, for the moment, and then she went on, with a sort of despair in her look and tones that was very terrible.

"On the death of my husband, Eleanor, I became acquainted with Jasper Vernon, who, being a near connexion of the family, somehow, from that time exercised a baneful influence over me. I was not rich, and was very proud; and Vernon worked so on my poverty and my pride that I became bound hand and foot to him; and, however my better feelings, if I had any, warred against such a step, soon became the ready instrument of his dark and hateful plots. He aided me in my need; but would to heaven that I had perished, rather than have lived to see all the misery and despair I have since endured through his means."

Lady Susan here closed her eyes, and for several minutes lay without speaking.

"On the death of your dear father, child, Vernon, in accordance with the colonel's will, became the arbiter of his children's destinies; and his first step was to place you under my care. A fatal accident discovered to him that Cecil was not the heir of the Delaval estates, and from that day his determination was taken to transfer them to himself. Herbert was a child of a singularly delicate constitution, and the least hardship or cruelty would in all probability remove him out of his way by death. Your father's property could not descend to a female, as it was strictly entailed, and Jasper Vernon then being the next heir, would immediately succeed to a princely fortune."

Eleanor heard but little of all this explanation, for her mind had been arrested by Lady Susan's declaration that Cecil was debarred from his inheritance; it was not, however, until her ladyship had ceased that she could sufficiently find words to exclaim—

"Cecil not succeed to the inheritance of his family, madam! oh, you are surely deceiving me."

"Eleanor, I am not," said her ladyship, solemnly. "Cecil cannot succeed to the Delaval estates."

"Madam, you must be deceiving me," exclaimed the tortured young woman, casting a terrified glance around her. "Cecil is the elder son."

"Such were my exclamations on the villain Vernon's first acquainting me with the circumstance. But, alas! Eleanor, Cecil is not your brother."

A sudden gleam of joy for a moment irradiated Eleanor's pallid face at this terrible announcement. Lady Susan was

electrified, for she had naturally expected that her auditor would exhibit every mark of incredulity or sorrow at such a discovery. The happy smile faded almost as suddenly as it had started into being, and Eleanor said, with mournful despair,—

“Alas! madam, I cannot believe you.”

Nothing, in all the course of time since her accident, exhibited Lady Susan in a more altered light than did this assertion. She neither looked angry, nor frowned, but said, with the same mournful firmness,—

“Ah, my child, I do assure you, I only avow the truth: Cecil has none of the Clarendon blood in his veins, love.”

For a moment it flashed through Eleanor's brain that Lady Susan's assertion was actually the truth. Cecil was so unlike what she remembered Colonel Clarendon to have been, and so very unlike Herbert, who was a boyish image of the latter, that she felt shaken in her incredulity. It was so hard, however, to destroy the belief of a lifetime, and she had been taught so constantly to regard Cecil as her brother, that her scepticism returned; and, although she did not attempt again to refute Lady Susan's doctrine, she yet listened with such a careless demeanour that, had the latter not been occupied by her own feelings, she might soon have seen that she was preaching to the idle air.

“It was Vernon's intention, on getting rid of Herbert, to marry you to some gentleman of fortune, as remote from Delaval as possible, and Norman Macdonald seemed cut out by providence to further his schemes; alas, Eleanor, my old vow of obedience compelled me to obey him, and I introduced you to each other. How could poor Norman escape the temptation? you were beautiful, gentle, and good, and Norman's chivalrous and manly nature soon owned the power of your charms. For a time, my guilty fears seemed confounded. I believed that you regarded Norman with the same tender affection, and it was not until after the accident on the lake, that I began to tremble. Eleanor, do you love Norman Macdonald?”

“As a friend, madam, I respect him,” said Eleanor, firmly; “but nothing more.”

“I knew it! I felt that so unholy a plot could never prosper; I will not attempt, however, to intrude upon your confidence further;—poor, poor Norman!”

For the first time, for many years, tears stood in her cold, grey eyes, and her hand shook over the bright curls on which it rested.

“All this explanation weakens me, my love,” she said, the next moment, in an altered tone; “there is nothing more ter-

rible to hear, than the retrospect of a guilty career, such as mine, I fear, has been ; when I am stronger, I will tell you the rest, for I cannot part with life until I have confessed my sins and made atonement as far as lies in me."

Eleanor rose up, and stood before her with a pitying compassion on her beautiful countenance, that touched the wretched old woman to the heart.

"Can you say, 'I forgive you,' love?" she asked, in so imploring a tone, and yet so humiliated and heartbroken, that Eleanor could scarcely restrain her tears.

Eleanor bent over the withered and wasted hand that was stretched towards her, and kissed it.

"Now, my love, I can venture to carry my prayers for mercy to a more awful tribunal ; lay my Bible and Prayer-book near me, that I may, with a broken and contrite heart, entreat the blessed Saviour to intercede for me, the chief of sinners !"

She said this in a tone so gentle and so humble, that Eleanor's tears fell fast upon the coverlid.

"It is I that ought to weep, my child," said the old lady of Leven, mournfully, as she noted her emotion. "Now leave me !"

Eleanor did so, and in the silence of her own chamber, reviewed in her mind all that that once proud and haughty, yet now thoroughly humble and contrite being had told her ; one thing only did she not believe, and that was Lady Susan's assertion, that Cecil was not her brother ; and yet, if he was not !—again the same wild gleam of joy irradiated her countenance, and again the same mournful expression settled down upon it.

She was astonished, after a time, how calm and quiet were her emotions when the first shock of surprise had passed away ; she felt as if a new-found peace had descended upon her spirit, to shed its own holy quietness upon her during such a season of trial and grief, and she carried its holy influence with her into the sick room, her countenance exhibiting it outwardly in the placid calmness and repose by which it was distinguished.

All was hurry, bustle, and confusion in Lady Susan's chamber, when she entered. Janet and a chambermaid were busy packing trunks and portmanteaus, whilst their aged mistress was laying in bed, ready dressed, evidently for a journey.

"Oh, Lady Susan, you cannot—you must not endanger your life in this manner !" cried Eleanor, in absolute terror, as Lady Susan's intentions flashed across her mind. "You will really kill yourself by such a step."

The physician had just told her so in almost the same words ;
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she herself knew that she was dying, and this urged her to dare all to meet and confront Jasper Vernon before she died; she was heroic in a good cause, now that her heart was really touched.

"I can bear all safely, Eleanor," she said, with a smile. "They have put extra cushions in the carriage, and we will drive very slowly; I must see Mr. Vernon without delay."

"But the exertion will kill you!"

"No—no, I really am much better, and can bear it safely, love; so get on your clothes, and be ready as quickly as possible. Here, Janet! ring the bell, and desire Mc Graw to settle the bill; mind you cord Miss Clarendon's trunks well; an old woman's finery is of little consequence." And smiling, and talking gaily, to deceive her companion, the dying woman rattled on, gaily and merrily, until the preparations were all completed, and they came to carry her down to the carriage.

Now it was that her proud spirit showed itself most triumphantly; now it was that she could smile most naturally and gently, when every fibre wrung with agony and pain: now it was that her voice was firmest, and her eye the brightest, when death was tugging at her heart, and she knew too surely and too well that not many days could elapse, before the miserable farce would be ended, and the cheat discovered. Farce did I say! alas it was the noblest, the most affecting of tragedies, thus to behold an aged and enfeebled woman smiling down the King of Terrors as she did.

They placed her in the carriage, and for a moment her eyes closed, and a deadly faintness forewarned her that outraged nature would be revenged.

"I can only die in the attempt," was her inward exclamation, as she drove back the sickening sensation; and when Eleanor sprang in beside her, and began to arrange the shawls and pillows, she whispered, gaily "Thank you!—thank you—I am very comfortable, my dearest love."

It was a long and tedious journey, but Lady Susan bore it all with heroic firmness, and never permitted a peevish word or a groan to escape her quivering lips. "Will you read to me, Eleanor?" she asked, after a long pause, in a tone of entreaty infinitely touching and affecting, from those stern, haughty features; and when Eleanor asked what she should read, she said, with a gentle gesture, "The Psalms of David, love."

Eleanor took up Lady Susan's Bible, and read—"O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee; O let my prayer enter into thy presence: incline thine ear unto my calling."

"For my soul is full of trouble: and my life draweth nigh unto hell.

"I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit: and I have been even as a man that hath no strength.

"Thine indignation lieth hard upon me: and thou hast vexed me with all thy storms."

And so Eleanor read on to the end, her auditor repeating the words after her, and sighing bitterly whenever the holy psalmist, by an expression more than usually poignant and contrite, made her feel her own unworthiness and guilt. And then Eleanor turned to that sublime prophecy of Isaiah, in which the inspired Prophet foretells the coming of the Messiah, Lady Susan listening with a countenance in which shame and despair seemed struggling with hope for the mastery.

It became too dark at length to read more, and then they subsided into silence, Eleanor musing over her own sad and mournful anticipations which were, she felt, but too surely the precursors of many more, whilst Lady Susan Clarendon grew weaker and more weary with every mile of road they traversed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE two children were sitting in the good old Doctor's garden, Herbert enjoying the fragrant warmth of the air, and the perfume of the flowers; Sophy flitting about as gay and almost as lightsome as a fairy. Herbert had been convalescent nearly a week, and already the good Doctor's absence had appeared almost a lifetime to his merry little companion, so difficult is it for children to compute time by a dial.

"Who is your mamma, Sophy?" asked Herbert, who occupied a roomy garden chair, and was not disposed for much exercise just yet.

Sophy shook the shower of curls away from her glowing face, and looked up with an air of bewilderment, as Herbert put this question, with boyish gravity; her little breast heaved, and her eyes flashed, as she answered—"Papa is both papa and mamma to me, I believe."

The *naïveté* of the answer made Herbert smile. "And did you never know your mamma, Sophy?"

"Oh yes; a long time ago I remember having—oh, such a beautiful mamma! with beautiful black eyes, and a fair, pale

skin, who used to kiss me every morning when I stole on tip-toe into her room, and called me her dear Sophy :—mamma used always to lie in bed, Herbert.”

“Was she an invalid, Sophy?” asked Herbert, who was very inquisitive.

“I don’t know what that means,” rejoined Sophy, quickly, “only it was so; and then, I remember, one morning when I stole in, mamma did not speak, and when I touched her cheek, it felt—oh, how the cold touch thrilled me!” and Sophy burst into a passionate flood of tears, and sat down at Herbert’s feet.

She looked so beautiful, and her beauty was of such a touching character at this moment, that Herbert felt that he had never seen anyone so lovely as little Sophy, in his life.

“Don’t cry, Sophy, don’t!” said he, kissing the broad, fair forehead that lay upon his knee—“and my dear mamma died too.”

“Did she?” asked the child, lifting up her face with that pretty air of bewilderment that became her childish beauty so well.—

“And was she cold—and could she not speak to you, Herbert?”

“People never can speak, Sophy, when they are dead,” said Herbert, solemnly. “Their soul has gone up to God, and the body decays and turns to dust again.”

His child-companion crept nearer to him, and stole a fat, chubby arm around his neck; her soul had unconsciously imbibed the greatest mystery of our being, and for a moment she sat buried in thought. At last, she looked up, with her radiant smile, and said—“Mamma lies near the old church there—can you walk so far?”

“I will try,” said the boy.

“Oh do! and I will show you such a pretty churchyard—the grass grows so green over the graves, and the ivy and roses twine so prettily over the old belfry, that I often take my book there, and sit for hours when the sun is bright and warm; the sexton is such a queer old man, and quite deaf; I’m rather afraid of him, but you are a boy, and need not care if he grumbles at you,—come, follow me!” and away sped the rosy fairy, with a laugh that made the very woods echo again, so blithe and merry were its tones.

Herbert followed her, more slowly, for he was still feeble and weak, across the flowery garden, along a shady lane, at the end of which stood the churchyard wall, which might have easily passed for a hedge at a little distance, so thick and even was the garland of ivy that clambered over it. Sophy had already pushed open the old-fashioned wicket, and was now kneeling at the side of a grave, the neat head and foot-stone, and well

trimmed turf of which, showed that loving hands kept it in perpetual repair.

The setting sunlight fell full upon the old church, lighting up the small diamond shaped panes, until they gleamed in their dark setting of ivy, like so many stars; it was a quaint, and old-world looking place, with crumbling turrets, and a wide, old Norman porch and tower, from which Sophy's merry voice startled an immense assemblage of starlings and jackdaws, which kept sailing and chattering overhead, as if they were indignant at being disturbed in their aerial dwellings.

Beyond, stood the humble vicarage, its grounds separated from those of the church by a slight chain, which seemed scarcely to divide the living from the dead; it, too, had its diamond casements and ivied porch—its roses, that almost reached the roof—and its humble orchard; and, a moment afterwards, Herbert descried the tall, spare form of the vicar, with his white hair and his broad-brimmed hat, as he walked, in solemn meditation, along the yew-tree alley of his garden.

Herbert then crept up to Sophy's side, and, at the same moment, two men who had been sleeping among the grass, got up and crept away beneath the shadow of the church.

"Did you not see those men, Herbert?" asked Sophy, when he joined her; "two such great scowling creatures, with black, matted hair, and dark, fierce faces."

"No:—where are they?—which way did they go?" demanded Herbert, who instantly thought of Rudd, whenever he heard of men with fierce, scowling faces; "Oh, Sophy, did you know them?" he added, with boyish terror.

"Oh no, I never saw them before," responded the child, who trembled like an aspen leaf; "but do not follow them, dear Herbert."

Herbert looked irresolute. "If it was Rudd?" he asked himself, and the cold sweat stood in great drops upon his forehead.

"Oh, let us go home, Herbert," sobbed Sophy, in childish terror; "they looked so fierce—oh, let us go home!" and she began to run towards her own territories.

Herbert followed her at a slower pace, because he still felt tempted to try and discover whether the man who had terrified poor Sophy so much, was really his old tormentor or not: he would not have dared to have confronted Rudd for his life, and so he fancied he could have stolen round by the old church, and caught a glimpse of them from a distance; but all this while he was walking slowly away from them, and through all the rest of the evening he felt haunted with his old terror.

Sophy forgot it almost immediately, for she had none of the

fearful recollections of ill-usage and cruelty which had embittered Herbert's boyhood so keenly, and long before she was put to bed for the night, her step was as buoyant, her eye as bright, and her laughter as merry and blithesome, as Herbert had ever known it.

The old servant man came to put him to bed at last, and Herbert, with a sinking heart, followed him up the stairs, and suffered himself to be undressed, and murmured his prayers as fervently as was his wont. A strange, indefinable terror, however, had seized upon his soul, and long after the old man had gone away, and taken the candle with him, did Herbert watch the dim objects around him, in the faint moon-light, expecting at every moment to see the threatening form of Rudd start into being from amongst them.

And the wind moaned around the old house, and the stars watched the boy with their cold, bright eyes, as he lay in his terror and despair.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A MILE or more from the old doctor's residence, stood an old house, still called the Kennel, from its having been the head quarters of a pack of celebrated fox-hounds; the hounds were, however, dead many a long and merry year before, and the place was fast falling into decay, when a lawless vagabond, who combined the two opposite callings of poacher and smuggler, took possession of it, unchallenged, and had now lived in it unmolested a dozen years or more,—how, no one cared exactly to inquire.

All around lay dark, silent woods, through which winded a narrow road, full of dangerous ruts and pits, which few dared to fathom, unless they had business that called them to the Kennel; and this was so seldom, and their visits so few, that the road was now almost lost, and scarcely to be discerned, except by those who had known it perfectly in earlier times.

In its exterior, the Kennel was a long, low, dismal-looking place, weather-stained, and worn, and not apparently kept in the best possible repair. It had been a merry place of yore.

“ But something ailed it now—the place was cursed,”

and so it got an evil name, and soon became the resort of the

idle and the lawless, the smuggler, the poacher, and the highwayman, who were still pretty numerous and strong in those parts even then.

A strange old place was the Kennel, when you did get inside, with great rambling passages, big enough and dark enough to lose yourself in ; huge, low-raftered rooms, with immense bay-windows, the ceilings black with age, and the walls grimed with dirt. In fact, it was such a wilderness of a place, that Jacob Speed, its owner or tenant, whichever you may call him, once stowed away a couple of smugglers, when hard run by the excise, and kept them hid for a week in a room which no one but himself knew the way to.

Speed himself, as we have said, was a smuggler and a poacher, and in his person he seemed to combine the attributes of both. When in his ordinary humour, he had all the slinking slyness and craft that distinguishes the land-species of outlawry, with a slow, drawling voice, a dogged, sullen manner, and a heavy, sal-low countenance, which must have been the reason he had never married, he was so ugly. When the devil was aroused within him, however, and his temper was allowed full swing, the whole nature of the animal appeared to be transformed ;—he seemed to attain full six inches of extra height, and instead of walking with his gaze upon the ground, and his back almost looking over his head, it was then only that you saw what a powerful build of frame he possessed, and you already felt by anticipation the powerful grasp of those sinewy and athletic limbs.

Then it was that the hoarse, gruff tones of his voice seemed to rise from that deep, broad chest ; then it was that his eyes flashed and glared upon you, and the deep veins stood out like whipcord on his scarred and sunburnt brow ; and then you saw the bold, daring, and reckless smuggler taking the place of the sly, sneaking, cringing poacher, which he had hitherto appeared.

Never a drop of Jacob Speed's Schnaps and Cognac paid the Queen's duty, no more than did he pay rent for his house, or his hares and pheasants. He sold cheap in whatever he dealt, for he paid little or nothing for his wares, and he pretty soon was extensively patronized by all the lawless vagabonds of the adjoining parishes, who made the rambling old Kennel, as the house still was called, the rendezvous of all their plots and stratagems.

It was to this house that the two men whom we have seen in the churchyard were bending their steps, at the very time that Herbert was lying, quaking with terror, in his snug little bed-room, in the old doctor's house. One of them knew the

place well, for he had been there many a time before, and he now was striding vigorously forward, perfectly indifferent to all the mire and slush he encountered in his progress. He was singing, too, with a powerful and not unmusical voice, some ditty or other, in which Robin Hood and his merry men were the heroes, and the prior of Bedford was the victim.

"What rare good luck!" exclaimed his companion, who plunged and floundered about, through his ignorance of the road they were traversing.

"What is rare good luck, Rudd, my merry fellow?" inquired Black Dick, pausing in his song.

"Merry be hanged! Will you never stop that accursed pipe of yours?" growled poor Rudd, who had grazed his foot against a tree.

"Why should I?—tira tiralà!" sang the other, gaily. "But tell me, what is rare good luck, my buck?"

"Falling in with the boy, to be sure. It is the little whelp I told you of, if you remember."

"When! hang me! that pretty little fellow, all so nicely dressed, cannot be the young hauggallows you brought to our house a few nights ago?"

"But I tell you it is," retorted Rudd, with an oath; "I should know him among a hundred."

"What do you propose to do, then? I suppose you mean to get him into your clutches again as soon as possible—eh?"

"Of course I do. By to-morrow morning, I'll wager my life we'll have him trudging alongside of us, wherever we may happen to be going."

"How?"

"How be hanged! why, by breaking into the house he lives in, robbing it, and then carrying the brat off; that's easy enough to be done, isn't it?"

"Oh, easy enough," laughed Black Dick, who was quite as well accustomed to such things as Rudd himself, and took them quite as carelessly. "Then, if that's the order of the day, I vote we get Speed to give us a good blow out in the way of supper, and plenty of drink into the bargain, and then we'll be ready for the work."

"The very ticket! Push on, and let's get supper ordered as soon as possible; he'll perhaps be able to tell us who this fellow is that's taken my young fledgling under his wing—Curse the darkness, the rutty roads, and the tree stumps, say I!"

Black Dick laughed gaily, and began to sing more gaily, and trudge forward at a quicker pace, Rudd following him as well as the darkness and the mire would allow. At length he stopped, and announced that they were immediately in front of

Clarendon.

the Kennel, although Rudd was able to discover nothing before them, so great was the darkness of the night.

Black Dick, however, whistled in a peculiar manner, and presently a door was unbarred, and a tall, dark figure appeared in the open doorway, shading a lighted candle with one hand, whilst with the other he peered wistfully into the dark night without.

"Who is there?" he demanded, in a hoarse, deep voice, that made itself distinctly heard above the din of half a dozen ferocious dogs, who leaped and howled around him like demons.

"Lie down with ye, ye whelps," roared the smuggler host, in a stentorian voice—"what dy'e want here at this time o'night, my men, and wharfor cannot ye come in honest day-light, like other folk?"

"When did you begin to deal wi' honest folk, Jacob?" inquired Black Dick, with a sarcastic laugh; the last time, too, if I remember right, that I was in this country, your visitors were mostly of that sort that preferred the night to the day to pay their visits in."

"And what if they did?" retorted the smuggler with a gruff laugh, as he drove the two mastiffs before him into the house; "cannot a man choose his own time to receive his own friends in?—But what's your will, again? and that's a civil question."

"Why, if the coast's clear, we want some supper, and maybe a glass or two of grog, as we've been travelling on fasting stomachs pretty nearly the whole day."

"Come in then, and welcome," rejoined the other, gaily; "there hasn't a soul crossed my doors to-day."

"All the better," retorted Black Dick, "and if any one should come, good Jacob, let them batter every shutter and panel to powder before you lift bar or undo bolt to admit them."

They were by this time within the house, and Jacob Speed, having barred and locked the door, led them into a lofty room, with a stone floor and a rafted ceiling, in which a good fire was blazing merrily; a large copper was simmering on the fire, from which, when the lid was lifted by a stout lass, who was evidently Jacob's daughter, a delicious odour of blackcock, partridge, and hare tickled the noses of the guests, and made their mouths water in anticipation of the savoury meal they were presently to sit down to.

"I've got some famous double ale, gentlemen," said Jacob, who had now got the table arranged for supper, and was busily engaged in dishing it up.

"Let's have a jock of it, Jacob, and put a little in a saucepan

on the fire, to mull," said Black Dick, who certainly contrived at present to monopolise the attention of his host; "there's nothing warms one so quickly as a drop of mulled ale. Here, Rudd, sit up to table."

"You look as if you had lived on the backbone of a herring for a month, messmate," said Jacob, scanning Rudd's gaunt, half-famished visage, with an inquisitive stare

"May be I have, and may be I haven't," growled Rudd, sulkily; "that stew of yours though would find a poor devil an appetite under the very jaws of death."

Jacob Speed smacked his lips, and ladled out a pretty large dishful, which he placed before the surly wretch. "There, fill thy belly full, and then come again if thou wants more," he said with a laugh.—"Black Dick, thou can help thyself."

"As I have done many a time before, and intend to do many a time again," said the latter, gaily, attacking the huge tureen which stood between Rudd and himself; and where, pray, do you get all these dainty things? thou must have a wonderful preserve."

"Oh, wonderful," retorted Isaac, wiping his lips, and winking his keen, grey eye, as if it was the best joke in the world; "I have to thank my Lord's gamekeepers for it all."

"How?"

"Why, they take my Lord's money for watching his game, and so they do in fine nights; but when it blows great guns and the rain comes down with a will, they lie snug a bed with their wives, and then I steal out into the preserve and fill a couple of bags with the poor silly birds in no time."

"A cheap way that, Isaac."

"And a very good one, too," rejoined the other, eagerly. And who's the worse, pray? not my Lord, for he can't miss the birds, and I'm sure, I'm not."

"Nor we either," added Rudd with a sour laugh. "Is that mulled ale ready, Bayles?"

"I'll reach it," said Jacob, starting up; "Judith, you can go to bed," addressing his daughter.

The girl lighted a rushlight and disappeared; Rudd drew his chair towards the fire, filled his glass, and lighted his pipe.

"Niceish country hereabout," he said, drawing a whiff.

"Pretty well," said Isaac, assentingly; "you are a stranger here, I fancy."

Rudd nodded acquiescence—"That's an abominable road you have through the woods," he said, surveying his boots, which were wofully bespattered with mud.

The landlord laughed, and glanced over to Black Dick.

"Those that take it at night," he said, "know it pretty well in the dark; some of 'em, though, would hardly find their way in the daylight."

"We passed a very pretty place near the church; who lives there, pray?"

"An old place, with great balconied windows, and chimneys enough to serve a barrack."

"Yes, and a sun-dial on the lawn."

"Dr. Rivers: he's away just now."

This was said significantly, and Rudd fully understood it.

"Is he rich?"

The other nodded, and drank off his glass.

"You might do very well there," he said, darting another keen glance at his interlocutor.

"Any men in the house?" inquired Bayles, who had been listening intently all this time.

"Only one, and two or three women. But they're all old: a child might do it," he said, contemptuously.

Rudd glanced over to his confederate, and began to smoke faster than before.

"I don't care much for the money," he said, after a pause, "although that, of course, is an inducement; but he has a boy."

"The one we saw in the churchyard?" inquired Bayles.

"Yes. I showed him to you."

"What use can he be to you?" asked the two men, in a breath.

"Much. He somehow escaped from me the night I came to Dover, and I have never clapped eyes upon him since. I must have that boy again, Bayles."

"And welcome, too, for what I care," rejoined Black Dick, carelessly. "As long as I go halves with the ready, I don't care for a beggar's whelp like that."

"He is no beggar's whelp, I promise you," retorted Rudd, gruffly. "He would heir many a broad acre, if he came to manhood."

"Which you, of course, will do your best to prevent," said the other, at random.

"Perhaps. There are more than one interested in that;" and Rudd began to smoke again.

"I suppose you never try your hand at this kind of thing, now, Jacob," said Bayles, sipping his ale, and staring into the fire. "It wouldn't be safe, in your position."

"Never so near home," said Isaac, gravely; "it might get me into trouble: and for that reason you must not attempt to come back here, as the Kennel will be the very first place they'll search after it's found out. Which road will you take?"

"To London," said Rudd, decisively, although he intended taking quite a contrary one; "it's always safe;" and he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and refilled it.

The three men sat up talking, in a low, cautious tone, until midnight had struck, and then Rudd and Black Dick, swallowing a stiff tumbler of brandy apiece, enveloped themselves in a couple of loose cloaks, for which Rudd paid Jacob Speed liberally, and, having discharged the reckoning, the pair sallied forth upon their enterprise.

The night had now changed to wet, and, as the rain came drifting upon their faces, each congratulated himself upon the favourable nature of the weather, which was certainly dark and blustering enough for any enterprise; and, armed with a dark lantern and a crowbar, Bayles struck bravely forward, closely followed by Rudd, who did not on this occasion anathematize either the ruts he encountered or the stumps of trees with which his shins came in contact.

CHAPTER XL.

HERBERT was asleep in bed.

He was dreaming gaily, poor little fellow, of his papa, his pony, and his dogs; for he was, in fancy, at Delaval once more. Oh, happy, happy dreams! Oh, delightful visions that, over-leaping time and space, carry us back once more to childhood's merry spring-time! The prisoner in his cell recks not of the darkness and the iron chain; he sees once again the low-roofed cottage, with his mother and her noisy band seated in the porch, and the orchard, the scene of many a joyous game. The poor little sempstress, weary and pale with many a nightly vigil, hears again the lazy drone of the mill-wheel that lulled her childhood's dreams, when the world was not one endless task, and gusset and band and cross-stitch were to her things unknown,—when the year was one eternal summer, for it was all summer then, and the flowers she culled were nature's handiwork, and not her own. Oh, happy dreams! oh, balm of weary hearts! the oil that makes life's wheels go easily in this eternal round of toil! Oh, blessed dreams, whose only sting is that we awake, and find that ye are the "baseless fabric of a vision," that "leaves not a wreck behind!"

Suddenly he was awoke by a cold breath of air blowing upon his face. He started up in bed, and screamed out in his terror,

for there were dark forms at the window, looming out preternaturally vast and threatening in the dimness of the morning. They were wrenching away the bars that protected the lattice. Now they fall, and a man springs lightly into the room. Herbert takes refuge beneath the bed-clothes, never daring to cry out, even if he could, although fear would not allow him now to speak in a whisper.

"Leave him to me," growled a voice he knew, alas! only too well, "and you stand at the door, and fell down the first that comes through."—He heard no more, for a sickening sensation came over him. He had an indistinct recollection of being seized by Rudd's powerful hands, and the next instant fainted.

When he came to himself again he was lying on some wet grass, apparently in an extensive wood, for there were trees around and above him, and the sound of running waters nigh at hand. The men—there were two of them—were leaning over him, whispering eagerly to each other, whilst one ran his coarse, rough hand rapidly across his face, for it was impossible to see whether he was sensible or not.

"We must run on to B——," whispered Rudd, rapidly. "If you will carry the bag, I will take the brat on my shoulder."

Herbert then felt himself hoisted up in the air, and carried rapidly forward. The cold air presently revived him, and he began to be aware of his misfortunes. The heaviest of these was that he was once more in Rudd's power, and this of itself was a heavy calamity enough for him to bear. Added to this, however, he was still weak and faint from recent illness, and would inevitably sink down under the new hardships that would fall to his lot if he remained long in this man's power.

Herbert's misfortunes had taught him fortitude. He did not lose heart even at this wretched moment, but kept every sense on the alert, in the hope of catching something from the conversation of the two men that would aid him in his escape.

As the day dawned he could discern the features of Rudd's associate, whom he soon found to be neither Barns nor Bunting. The man, in fact, was a total stranger to him. Had he to hope or to fear from this circumstance? he asked himself twenty times. Time only could show.

He noticed that this man carried a bag, in which was stowed away, in all probability, the poor old doctor's plate. A pang shot through his heart as he remembered how gaily the doctor had set off the preceding night to London, in search of Cecil and Mr. Dalton. Then he pictured to himself the bitter disappointment they would all experience when they returned and found him gone, perhaps for ever; and this really did bring the tears into his eyes, and he could scarcely forbear weeping aloud.

"Can you stand, young 'un?" growled Rudd, lowering him to the ground after they had walked a few miles.

"I will try, sir," was the poor lad's submissive reply; and he began to crawl feebly after them. Rudd soon slackened his pace, on perceiving that he could not keep up with them, and then each taking a hand, they dragged rather than led him forward. Long before they reached B——, they found the road thronged with people; it was apparently a holiday, for they were all dressed out in their best, and were in the highest spirits. Rudd at first was inclined not to continue their journey in this direction, but after a hurried consultation with Black Dick, they resolved to go forward, Rudd hoisting Herbert on his shoulders once more.

As they approached the town every lane and pathway swelled the crowd of which they now formed a part. Young and old, the lame, and the blind, all seemed bound to one goal, and all trudged forward as gaily as if to a wedding or a feast. Carried onwards by the multitude, they continued to follow in their wake until they had reached the Castle Hill, and then the secret of all this concourse of people was explained. In the midst of a wide square, which was now filled with a moving sea of heads, over against the county jail, a gallows reared its hideous machinery, black and threatening. A couple of murderers were to be executed that morning, and the surrounding country poured forth its inhabitants by thousands to see them die.

An hour had yet to elapse, and Rudd, separating himself from the crowd, whispered Black Dick to follow him, and led the way to a dark and dirty alley which communicates with that part of the town in which the Jews and marine-store dealers lived. Here they soon found a house, the landlord of which not only could give them a good breakfast, but was willing to exchange Herbert's new clothes for considerably older ones, and expressed his willingness to find a customer for the poor old doctor's plate as well. By the time all this was over, the time of the execution had nearly arrived, and the two men hurried away to witness it, Rudd carrying Herbert along with him to prevent the possibility of his escaping.

The crowd was much more densely packed now than it had been on their leaving the hill, and it was not without some difficulty they contrived to push themselves forward until they arrived immediately in front of the gibbet, which was not more than twenty yards distance from the place they occupied.

Presently the deep tolling of the bell announced their approach, and Herbert, sick with excitement and terror, turned away his head to escape the dreadful sight. Rudd and his companion,

however, had no such compunctions. Strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that these two men, who every day committed crimes for which the gallows was the only effectual punishment, and who might, therefore, seem to stand in salutary terror of its horrors, gloated on the spectacle that was now about to present itself to their eyes, and actually shivered with impatience until the victims appeared.

First came the gaol chaplain, habited in white, reading the service for the dead; and after him—how the sight made Rudd start, and sent the blood back to his heart!—stalked a gaunt, gigantic figure, whose reckless bearing, aided by a fierce and undaunted countenance, caused an audible thrill through the vast concourse of spectators, and in whom Rudd recognised, to his horror, his old companion and associate Spike. The whole scene reeled around him,—hangman, gallows, crowd, and victim,—and he nearly fell to the ground, so strong was the revulsion of feeling it caused him.

Another shout, and cursing his own soft-heartedness, the housebreaker looked up again. A short, squat, plump figure, dressed in the cast-off finery of a huntsman, sadly faded and worn, which lent a tragic hideousness to the affair, met his view. The eyes rolled and leered on the hushed and silent crowd, whilst the grotesque features, which all the terror of his position could not subdue, worked convulsively, evidently from strong and painful emotion; suddenly the poor wretch's eye lighted on Rudd, notwithstanding all the latter's efforts to escape notice, and in a moment their whole expression changed.

"There is one gone!" cried a thousand stentorian voices, blending themselves into one terrific roar. "Ah! ah! he dies hard! look! look!" and again the howl swelled up its terrific diapason to the eternal vault of heaven.

Poor Barns heard it not! he saw not when Spike made the fatal leap;—with his eyes rivetted on Rudd, watching his motions with sickening interest, he leaned forward over the platform as if he would have cleared the space between them if he could.

Rudd with an effort turned himself round so as to escape the fearful sight, and in another minute another howl rose up around him. "He is dead now," whispered Black Dick, gruffly, in his ear; and looking up, the housebreaker saw two stiff, senseless figures swinging back and forward in the wind before him.

CHAPTER XLI.

LURKING like a spider in the web he had woven for so many of the characters of this history, Jasper Vernon beheld with terror and dismay the evil influences that seemed to counteract all his deep-laid and skilfully-conceived plots and machinations. Dalton, the terrible and omnipotent Dalton, was already on his traces, and, sooner or later, he felt that all would be discovered; the mine was already sprung, and it only needed time and patience to work out the end.

He was sitting in his gloomy and dreary dining-room, one evening, just after dinner, in no very happy mood, thinking of all this, between the pauses of sipping his claret and peeling his walnuts, and endeavouring to make up his mind to do something decisive in the present posture of affairs—with his thin legs resting on the fender, his keen, thin face, supported by one hand, turned upon the flashing fire-light, wasted, worn, yet still with indomitable resolution stamped in on every keen, emaciated feature, as if with aqua-fortis.

He had not much money by him just then, or he would have fled the country at once, and left all the rest to fate. There had been a terrible drain upon the splendid rental of Delaval, which he had found it impossible to avoid paying, and which, reckoning on the success of his plans, with regard to Colonel Clarendon's children, as certain, he had not hesitated to make. Had he but foreseen how events would have turned out, he would have retained it for a time, and then all might have been well.

And now, to be left with only a few miserable hundreds, when he might have commanded thousands,—there was torture in the thought! and with a bitter oath he started up, and began to pace the room with hasty steps.

His own fortune was so paltry as to be of little service at such a juncture. A few hundred acres of poor, hungry land, which had ruined every tenant that ventured to farm it, with a character too well known in the market to tempt an unwary capitalist to embark his money in, was scarcely likely to serve him in his present need. Besides, there were strange stories current in the country now, by whom invented or promulgated none cared to know, that would deter him from attempting to convert his patrimony into money at the present moment, even had he been ever so anxious to do so.

To stay and brave it out, was all that remained for him to do,—do that he must, and he at once began to steel his mind to adopt this alternative. Jasper Vernon was a coward at his heart, and a pleasant thing it was when he returned to his chair to picture to himself the wrath of Dalton and the vengeance of Cecil Clarendon, when all their pursuit ended, as he foresaw it would do, in disappointment.

The reader will bear in mind all that this man had done to poison the happiness of so many people—Cecil, Eleanor, the Daltons, Herbert,—and now, added to these, was Lady Susan, more terrible than all! for she only knew all his base villany and deceit. Only that morning he had received a letter in her stiff, masculine hand, telling him that she was already on her journey to England, with the intention of arraying herself in the enemy's ranks.

How he cursed poor Herbert, who was the innocent cause, as he had been the victim of his plots. Then, with a strange, dreamy wonder, he began to speculate upon the poor child's fate, and whether he was still alive, or not. He shuddered, as he listened to the pattering of the rain on the windows, and drew, with a mighty sense of relief, nearer to the cheerful blaze, and stirred the logs, that sent a shower of sparks up the black, cavernous chimney.

Presently, he was aroused from his reflections by a quick loud knock at the door.

"Come in!" he cried, trembling, although he knew it could only be a footman.

"If you please, sir, there's a message from the Blue Boar, that a lady desires to see you immediately."

"To see me?" ejaculated Jasper, who instantly concluded it to be Lady Susan. "Was there no name mentioned, James?"

"No, sir; the helper only said the lady was mortal bad, and that you hadn't to be long in going, for fear it was over late."

"What could be meant by being too late?" thought the cowardly wretch, as he made his preparations for setting out with a foreboding heart. "Too late!"

The words rung in his ears with fatal significance, as he plashed through the rain and mud, on his way to the village inn, and it was not until he was in the presence of the stern old lady of Leven, that he understood to their full import the meaning of those mysterious words.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE good old doctor never rested until he had arrived in London, and even then, the only delay he permitted himself to make, was to snatch a hasty breakfast, wash, and arrange his toilet, and then drive at once to Mivart's, where, fortunately, he remembered of old, that Dalton was in the habit of staying, when in town.

To his eager inquiries whether they knew if Mr. Dalton was in England, the waiter informed him, to his astonishment, that Mr. Dalton was not only in England, but actually in the house at that very moment. The old doctor scribbled a few lines on an address card, requesting an interview, and desired the man to carry it upstairs.

"I will do so, sir, although I am afraid it will stand you of little service," was the civil rejoinder; "for Mr. Dalton is very busily engaged, just now, and not at all well in health, besides."

"Make the attempt, notwithstanding," said Dr. Rivers, slipping a crown piece into his hand. "I am sure he will see me when he knows who it is."

Presently a message came down, begging the good old man to walk upstairs, and up he went, accordingly, his heart throbbing as violently as if he had been a young man of twenty, on the eve of seeing his mistress. The door opened, and Edward Dalton, stately, majestic, and dignified, even in his grief, stood before him.

"I am sorry, my dear doctor, I can give you so poor a welcome, just now," said he, in his calm, sweet voice, as he grasped with kindly pressure the hand of his old and venerable friend. "At the present moment I am engaged in a very painful search."

Something surely prevented the dear old man at this moment from explaining all in a breath, for, after vainly attempting to speak, he allowed Dalton to proceed—

"This gentleman is Mr. Cecil Clarendon."

"Poor little Herbert's brother!" exclaimed the doctor, with a great effort.

Dalton looked surprised, for he knew that Colonel Clarendon had held no communication with his old friend for several years, simply because they had ceased to live in the same neighbourhood.

"One night," said the doctor, glancing round the company, for Norman Macdonald was there as well, with his placid smile, "I was called up out of my warm bed by a poor fisherman, to

visit a child who, as he said, was in a high fever, which was certainly only the truth. I had never seen anything so wasted and emaciated as the appearance of the poor little fellow, who, it seems, had been picked up, a night or two before, on the beach by this honest fellow, the man with whom he had been travelling having fallen over the quay at Dover, and been drowned. A merciful providence spared the poor boy's life, and, after a few days, I had him removed to my own house, where fresh country air, and a generous diet, have so far restored him that he now resembles in some sort the Herbert Clarendon of earlier and happier days."

"Herbert Clarendon!" echoed Cecil, falling on his neck in a paroxysm of tears. "Is poor Herbert found at last?"

"He is," said the doctor, kindly embracing him. "I left him in a fair way of recovery; and I trust, by the time we all get down there again, he will be as strong and as well as ever he was in his life."

Cecil heaved a deep sigh, and seemed to be endeavouring to realize in his own mind the startling intelligence the good old man had just communicated to him.

"Much yet remains to be done, my friend," said the latter, addressing Dalton. "The suffering and misery the poor little fellow has undergone would wring the hardest heart; and a day of retribution, even in this world, is surely in store for the heartless authors of his wretchedness. A villain whom he calls Rudd—"

Dalton started, but instantly recovered himself, and continued to listen to the doctor's explanations with every outward exhibition of calmness.

"And who, by his description, must be a monster of cruelty, has, it seems, dragged him through the country in a condition not one whit better than that of a common beggar. The poor little fellow, it seems, escaped from his inhuman tyrant shortly after falling into his hands, and found an asylum in the house of a humane blacksmith, from which Rudd, in turn, tore him away; and since then his lot has been cast amidst the lowest scenes of human guilt and degradation. From this he has at length been happily rescued, and nothing now remains to be done but to restore him to the care of those from whom he has the best right to look for protection. As for Rudd and his guardian, Mr. Vernon—"

"Their punishment, if delayed, will only be the fuller and more fearful," said Dalton, in a terrible voice. "That may be safely left to me, my dear friend. And now, my valet shall get a fresh carriage, that shall hold the whole of us, and, with four

good posters, we will soon annihilate time and space, and make poor Cecil happy."

Williams was accordingly despatched to Long Acre, to procure a travelling carriage, and four horses having been put to it, Dalton, Dr. Rivers, Norman, and Cecil, set off in the gayest possible spirits towards Dover.

"If I might proffer a prayer," said the good old doctor, drawing up the glass, as they rolled out of Rochester, where they had snatched a hurried luncheon, "it would be that you will consent to leave Herbert with me for a time. As you know, Mr. Dalton, I am an old man, with nothing but one dear child, left me as a death-bed legacy by a very dear friend, to expend my affection upon; and, as this darling is a little girl, just about Herbert's age, I would take it as a great kindness if you would permit Herbert to be her companion, until your own plans with regard to him are definitively settled."

"I have no possible objection to such a plan," said Dalton, grasping his hand; "and, as his guardian"—

"And I, as his brother," interposed Cecil, "cheerfully accede to Dr. Rivers's request. It would, in fact, complete my happiness."

Dalton sighed, and looked troubled. The secret he had so long and faithfully kept must be divulged ere long. But not now! not now! and he endeavoured to talk unconcernedly of the arrangements with respect to Herbert which Cecil and the doctor were now discussing with the greatest interest.

In spite of himself, however, sad and solemn thoughts took possession of his mind, and, as the day gradually darkened in upon them, these musings became so painful and absorbing that it was with absolute relief he at last heard the doctor exclaim—

"We are at our journey's end, gentlemen. Will you alight?"

Cecil sprang out, followed by Norman and the two elder travellers. They were standing in front of a plain, unpretending lodge, which formed the entrance to pleasure grounds, evidently of great beauty, and which looked doubly lovely in the soft moonlight.

Norman's arm was a positive help to Cecil, as they walked up the carriage sweep towards the house, so helpless had the state of nervous impatience he suffered rendered him. The door was flung open, displaying a handsome hall, lit up, with the old manservant standing on the steps.

"Where is Master Herbert?" cried the doctor, from a little distance.

"Oh, my dear old master!" faltered the old domestic, in a broken voice, "we have had nothing but misery since you left."

"But the boy—where is he?" demanded his master, with a sudden sinking of the heart, alarmed at the look of dismay the old man's face displayed. "Bring the boy, immediately."

"Oh, papa! dear papa!" cried Sophy, rushing into the old man's arms, and hiding her tear-stained face on his breast; "some horrid nasty men have torn dear, dear Herbert away with them."

"Oh, my God!" groaned the wretched old man, as the fatal truth burst upon him. "After all, our labour has been in vain."

He was startled by a heavy, dull sound behind him, and, on looking round, perceived that Cecil had fainted.

THE ANCIENT GROTTO.

BY MRS. ABDY.

ENTER: the scene that greets you here
No common scrutiny demands;
These walls, though perfect they appear,
Were fashioned not by modern hands.

The sea, long centuries ago,
Cast forth from its mysterious cells
The stores here ranged—a goodly show
Of beautiful and glistening shells.

These by ingenious hands were wrought
In accurate and close array;
And eager crowds, I doubt not, sought
The Grotto of an ancient day.

Beneath the shrouding earth conceal'd,
Long was it suffered to remain,
Till accident its site revealed,
And gave it to the world again.

Gaze on the shells so aptly placed
In graceful, well-proportioned lines ;
Mark well the harmony and taste
Shown in the various quaint designs.

Here lurk no symptoms of decay ;
Each polished shell is firm and bright.
Strange, by how unforeseen a way
Long-hidden works may start to light.

Alas ! how oft far different things
Are garnered in the hoards of time !
How oft the lapse of ages brings
Traces to view of secret crime !

Happy when time's progressive course
Only discloses to the sight
A hidden work like this—a source
Of innocent and pure delight,—

Revealing how a former race
Bade the dull chambers of the sod
Become a fair and pleasant place,
Embellished with the gifts of God.

AN ANECDOTE OF THE PENINSULAR.

DURING the Peninsular war, in which the Duke of Wellington had made himself so deservedly popular throughout Spain and Portugal, I had occasion to travel from Andalusia to Lisbon, overland, for the purpose of embarking at the latter port in the packet for England.

On quitting Seville, a worthy Spaniard, at whose house I had been for some time most hospitably entertained, requested I would take under my charge his eldest son, a lad of eighteen, who being intended for a diplomatist, it became desirable should complete his education by visiting England, Paris, and other countries.

And well did the young man afterwards justify the expectations of his parents; for not only was he, on returning home, elected Secretary to the Cortes, but afterwards ranked as one of the most distinguished deputies.

When we first started together, however, he was what might be termed a very raw lad, though so remarkably shrewd, as often to astonish those who based their opinion of him upon external appearances alone.

His worthy father, Don I. M. D., sent with us a trusty Gallician servant named Lorenzo, to take care of his darling child Francisco, and lessen some of my responsibilities while travelling through a foreign land.

Nor was it very long before such a functionary became very useful; for, having embarked at St. Lucar in a small craft of twenty-five tons (called a *mystico*), bound to Aya Monte, a rough sea soon proved young Francisco to be a much worse sailor than myself, and old Lorenzo to be better seasoned than either of us.

In addition, therefore, to other exclamations indicative of his state, I heard the poor fellow loudly praying his patron saint to take him back to his dear mother in la Calle de los Santos. Happily, the saint was inexorable, and the wind fair; so, after tossing about for twenty hours, we reached the little port of Aya Monte in safety, and here, having rested a few hours, we bargained with some boatmen to take us up the Guardiania to Mertola, a frontier town of Portugal, guarded by a fortress of no mean appearance.

This they did safely enough; but here began that adventure which is the chief burthen of my song; for during a recent visit to Gibraltar I had, like many other young civilians, caught not the yellow, but the *scarlet* fever, which had nearly proved so fatal to me and my companions on the present occasion.

The first symptoms were shewn in having a dark blue coat, cut in military shape, and decorated with some old nondescript military buttons.

The next were to encourage my very juvenile mustachios with olive oil, and fix a pair of gilt spurs to the heels of my boots, with a national cockade on my hat, to prove that I was a denizen of that country whose armies were then so triumphant everywhere.

Well, all this might have been harmless enough, but unluckily, in our voyage up the river we stayed some hours at a place where resided a *vieux militaire*, with whom I too readily made acquaintance.

He soon detected my youthful foible, and affecting to believe me a real soldier, suggested that my costume was hardly com-

plete without a sabre, such a one as HE could spare me for a few dollars, and that thus armed I might, on reaching Mertola, claim the horses or mules retained for military men on more advantageous terms than those furnished to travellers in general!

The bait was too tempting, and I bought a sword that might have belonged to Don Quixote himself, at the same time giving my friend a real Havannah cigar in token of eternal gratitude!

Alas! I little thought how slightly he deserved it.

A brilliant sun-set hailed our approach to the Castle of Mertola, beneath whose frowning battlements we anchored; and I hastened to step ashore with all the dignity becoming my assumed rank.

Nor was young Francisco unwilling to impose a little upon the *stupid* Portuguese as he called them; so placing under his arms a pair of horse pistols (the parting gift of a Castilian friend), we jumped up the stone steps, which passing under the castle windows, led to a little inn where we proposed to rest for the night.

The clanking of my sabre, however, and the apparent extent of my retinue (for Diego and the boatman each followed in line, carrying something or other), had brought several ladies to the balcony of the Chateau, who being informed that an English officer had just arrived, sent me and my companion a special invitation to take our chocolate with them, instead of at the Posada del Sol.

Of course, such an agreeable request was irresistible to my chivalrous feelings, but the young Don being unwilling to trust his Spanish life within side of a Portuguese fortress, deputed old Lorenzo to go in his stead.

Now old Lorenzo had his fears also, and these were not lessened by seeing two fierce sentries guarding the rude portals of our fair hostess's abode; still he dared not retreat, so having pocketed his master's pistols he followed me upstairs; and a cheerful voice encouraged me to enter a large *salle-a-manger*, wherein was seated a young damsel and her duenna at a table well furnished with refreshments.

The former received us very courteously, and expressed much regret that her father, the Governor, should be away. Whereupon I thought it necessary to excuse the absence of my friend on the plea of fatigue, and to introduce his confidential valet to the stately duenna, as a substitute.

So far, then, we were well paired, and conversation went on merrily; till all at once our attention was aroused by seeing a rough looking face peep in at the door, with an air of astonishment which was not very unnatural, considering all things.

But a woman's wit is rarely at fault; so the pretty Margueta jumped up, and giving the intruder an *abrazo*, said, "Oh, my dear papa, I knew you would be so glad to entertain an English officer, that I have invited one in, who has just arrived from the seat of war, and can tell you all the news!"

"*Bueno, bueno*," (Certainly, certainly), he replied, and having welcomed us with ten thousand *vivas* to his castle, followed it up by a suggestion that I should immediately report myself to the general at the barracks, and get our passports examined.

This we did, after passing a happy evening with the worthy Governor and his daughter, whose prepossession in favour of my countrymen, I learnt, had been founded upon the attentions of a certain English Major C—, who was for a long time quartered at, or near Mertola, and who, on being ordered away, left, among other presents, *one of his tooth brushes* to my little hostess, which she *naively* said, "she used every morning out of regard to his memory."

Well! the Portuguese general received us very civilly, but thought it his duty to inquire why, if I *were* a captain in the army, it had not been so specified in my passport, instead of terming me a *proprietaire* only?

This was a question for which I was quite unprepared; my complexion, too, soon betrayed me by assuming a rubicund tint, and was placed in still greater relief by the pallid features of poor Lorenzo, who, I believe, fancied himself already immured in a dungeon for life, as a Spanish spy.

The General and his secretary here both increased our confusion, by saying to me, "Why, sir, there is something so mysterious about your manner, that I must reluctantly make you prisoners till I have consulted with the authorities at Lisbon, from whom I received orders so to do in any case of doubt, which this certainly is!"

Now I knew too well from past experience that such communications between the provinces and the seat of government in Portugal often lasted many months, and sometimes *years*, and therefore felt seriously alarmed for the result of those very natural suspicions which my vanity and folly had thus created, and consequently, I for several moments stood aghast!

Luckily, my energies were roused by the exigencies of our situation, and suddenly recollecting to have left my namesake, Capt. S—, on the Tagus a few weeks previously, as commander of a splendid frigate, I ventured to assume his title, and say that the whole mistake was quite evident to me as being occasioned by the *STUPID* Spaniards in Seville, who, not knowing a naval from a *military* captain, had therefore described me as neither. Oh, how the worthy Galliego's bronzed face brightened

at the happy thought ! It actually "shed a gleam that cheered one on to victory ;" for when the General said "Yes, yes : but"—I filled up the sentence for him by adding, "*but* (as you were doubtless going to say, General), no official among our *more* ancient allies, the *Portuguese*, would have made such a blunder."

"True ! true !" exclaimed the wily secretary, "*still*"——

Now for a home thrust, thought I ; so looking at the latter *most expressively*, and jingling very genteelly some silver in my right-hand breeches pocket, I said,—

"Still, Mr. Secretary, the fault *is ours*, and *your* time must not be wasted in vain by the correction of it. Nevertheless, I shall take care to represent the matter properly on reaching my frigate, you may depend upon it ; when both your zeal and civility will, I hope, be rewarded."

This speech settled the business, and fresh passports were immediately made out, in which I modestly begged to be still described as a *proprietair*, lest any other officials not so enlightened as our present friends, should fail to understand what (I shall never again forget) the difference between a naval and a military captain !

Lorenzo began to breathe freely once more ! so, handing my cigar box to the General and his secretary, we all smoked the calumet of peace, and followed by my faithful Sancho, we both strutted away to the hotel, where young Francisco had been sleeping in happy ignorance of the ordeal we had passed through.

He was promptly roused, however, by a recital of it, and expressed so earnest a desire to quit such a dangerous place, that, long before sunrise, we were mounted on some sorry mules, which were with difficulty procured at this short notice.

Nothing further occurred to impede our journey to Lisbon ; whence I found the frigate *I was to command* had sailed ten days previously, and my gallant namesake only became aware of the honor I had done him, when we met in England a few years afterwards.

AN AUTUMN VOLUNTARY.

BY WILLIAM DODSWORTH, ESQ.

How lovely is this glorious August time !
 Half summer and half autumn, with its wealth
 Of cloudless skies, green fields, and golden woods,
 Ere yet the corn hath felt the sickle's touch,
 Or winter, with cold breath, hath robbed the woods
 Of one green leaf : beyond all seasons else,
 I love the autumn ! no chill blasts it hath
 To mar its beauty like reluctant spring ;
 Nor heat like the luxuriant summer's prime,
 To fire the throbbing brain, and leave its load
 Of langour on the senses.—Autumn comes
 A fruitful matron all with zone unbound,
 Crowned like a victor in the Olympian games,
 With all the fruity spoil of every clime !

We made of late a joyous idle day
 Amid the woods, a wild uproarious band
 Of young and old, the oldest youthful grown
 With rampant pleasure : o'er the hills we went,
 Making the welkin ring with many a shout,
 A merry rout, all drunken with the joy
 Of the blithe scene around us, and ourselves.
 Three decades and no more of earthly time
 Were registered upon the oldest brow,
 Scarce seasons more the youngest there could boast,
 Yet the same feeling stirred each kindred heart ;
 Gay worshippers we were of nature fair,
 And many a prayer and many a hymn we breathed
 Of loving wonder and of heartfelt praise.
 'Tis not alone in dim cathedral aisles,
 'Mid stoled priests and choristers, that prayer
 Goes up to God ! no, every accent breathed
 'Mid the dim woods, and on the lonely heath,
 In admiration of this wondrous globe,
 Ascends in tribute to its Maker's praise !
 So prayed we, and so sank upon each heart
 The calmness and the beauty of the whole.

By shady lanes and leafy paths we went,
 Childhood's light footsteps leading still the van ;
 Then manhood, he the generous and the kind,
 Beloved and loving, the one link that bound
 All hearts, and held them in the bonds of love,
 The sire of all those young ones, and the friend,
 The dear, dear friend of all ! his glowing cheek
 And kindling eye quick witnesses of all
 The joy within.—One maiden with the stamp
 Of womanhood scarce on her, and myself.
 Then loitering far behind, in boyish dreams,
 Now watching with abstracted air the clouds
 Dappling the deep blue sky above him, or transfixed
 A breathing statue, as his eye descried,
 Down the dark vistas of the woodland glade,
 Some scene that caught his fancy—singing oft
 Such scraps of household song as his young ear,
 In the recesses of its untried sense
 Could hold, came lingering still a lovely boy,
 Loath to forsake so fair a realm of joy.

So fared we onward till the woods had ceased,
 And lo ! a cottage, 'neath the spreading arms
 Of a majestic sycamore, we gained,
 Where an old dame, keen-eyed and bent with age,
 Though active with blithe looks and kindly words,
 Pressed us to enter. "'Neath the welcome shade
 Of this fair tree we'll rest ourselves a while,"
 Our leader said. Meanwhile, with eager eye,
 I marked how thrifty labour had improved
 The gifts a niggard nature had bestowed :
 The strip of garden ground was gay with flowers,
 Such as in antique hamlets still you see,
 Sweet gilliflowers that perfumed the balmy air,
 The flaunting hollyhock, the queenly rose,
 And woodbine, clambering round the shady porch ;
 A golden shower of fruit the orchard showed,
 Whilst, in the midst of the green lawn, a shaft
 Sustained a dial. "In so calm a cell
 A hermit, surely, here might end his days,"
 Our leader said ; then, with a cheery voice,
 Turning, he spake the kindly dame, "How blest
 In bright comparison with weary hearts,
 Immured in some dark festering city lane,
 You live." "Aye, sir, beyond all other scenes
 I love this lowly hut and these few fields :

Here in my merry girlhood's days I dwelt,
And many a time from forth this cottage door
Have looked out on a world of cloud and storm,
When all the valley 'neath a snowy shroud
Lay buried : here, at summer's radiant dawn,
I've watched the earliest sunbeam gild the sky,
Heard the blithe carol of the heaven-bound lark,
And the cock's merry crowing : here a bride
My husband brought me, and from this roof-tree
Three stately sons and one fair girl have seen
Borne to the grave : oh ! many a joyous hour,
And many a sad one, 'neath our humble roof
We've spent.—And now, two gnarled trunks,
The parent stems are standing all alone,
Robbed of their goodly brauches ; my old man
For fourscore years hath battled with the world,
Cheered and sustained 'mid many a bitter hour
By the sweet thought that his declining years
Would be cheered by the noble band of sons
The Almighty gave us ; 'twas an impious thought,
And fitly punished—but we have enough,
And in the world beyond the grave we'll meet.

Then, in her ever-changing mood, she brought
New milk to quench our thirst, and with blithe looks
Eyed the huge bowl around the circle pass,
Until the last had drained it. "We have more,"
She gently said.—"Our thirst is quite assauged ;
And now, blithe pilgrims, blither for your gift,
We'll wander homewards 'neath this glowing sky."
Few paces from her flowery realm she went,
To guide us to a path across the fields,
And left us with hushed lips to wend our way.
Down a steep slope the pathway led, the corn
Hemming us in, a sea of waving gold,
Across a rustic bridge, whose tiny stream
Stole silent as a dream beneath the shade
Of a few straggling alders, forth we went,
When suddenly the winding vale disclosed
A glorious vision to our startled eyes,
Bathed in the setting radiance of the sun.—
Hill piled on hill, with woodlands crowned, each crest
Blazing as if on fire ; beneath, a lake
Glittering below that cloudless sky, a sheet
Of molten gold, whilst in dim distance seen
The radiant sunset, cheating the dull gaze,

Illusive showed a city, with its spires,
 Temples, and minarets, glittering 'neath its light.
 "We only want the merry clang of bells,
 Earth's natural harmony, illusive to complete
 The enchantment," breathlessly I cried, and lo!
 Slow stealing up the vale, in fitful bursts,
 As the wind bore them—dying now away,
 Now swelling with a breezy gust, the chimes
 More musical than all the laboured strains
 Of melody by science taught, we heard,
 From the far distant hamlet in the vale,
 Breaking with their sweet harmony the peace,
 The sabbath stillness of the time and scene.

"If ever"—said our guide, with kindling eye,
 Breaking the silence when the music ceased—
 "If ever the great Ruler of the world
 Doth give His creatures a foretaste of heaven
 Here upon earth, methinks 'tis at such time
 As this, when earth in silent rapture seems
 Worshipping her Creator—when the round
 Of daily toil suspended on the world,
 Broods like some wondrous dream a silent peace,
 Mysteriously pervading earth and heaven.
 Then, in a voice exulting with its tones
 Of faith, he cried:—

—————"Oh, Wisdom Infinite!
 What wondrous love, Almighty Father, Thou
 Didst shower upon the creatures of Thy care,
 To sanctify one day in seven for praise!
 Thou, from Thy throne beyond the farthest star,
 Where the bright cherubim veil their radiant orbs
 Before Thy awful presence—Thou, oh, God!
 Wilt not despise the contrite sinner's prayer,
 If humbly offered—Immortal Spirit! grant
 Such measure of Thy wondrous power and love
 To us, Thy erring children, that the bonds
 In which we groan and travail shall be loosed
 Here upon earth: that purified by faith,
 By Thy ineffable love sustained and held,
 We may press forward to Thy glorious rest,—
 The eternal sabbath of the realms above!

How vain, alas! how worthless seems the dross
 For which we strive," he cried, with voice of scorn.

"If, in the winning of our earthly wealth,
We barter heaven for earth—a few short years
We flourish like some stately forest tree,
Then wither, and our lot for weal or woe
Is cast—a few short years of grief or joy,
And all is over!—all! 'tis but begun—
The eternity of life, and heaven or hell,
Is thence our portion.—But the lengthening shades
Of night steal o'er us, and we must be gone."

By this, the sky was studded o'er with stars,
Orion and the pleiads, with a host
Of humbler planets; and beneath their light,
Aided by such faint radiance as the west
Still lent us—o'er the dewy fields we went,
Musing within our hearts the solemn thoughts,
Sublime and awful, that the time had given.

MY FIRST LOAN.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HORT.

"And pray, sir, who do you imagine is to pay your debts?"
Quoth my masculine parent, with as small a proportion of the
gentle and urbane about his manner, as those who dwelt in his
presence were accustomed to witness. "And pray, sir, who do
you imagine is to pay your debts?"

Now it so happened, strange as the coincidence may appear,
that this very selfsame, identical question, aye, and couched in
similar terms, had been engrossing my innermost thoughts for
a very considerable time prior to my respected sire having
expressed any wish to be enlightened on that particular point.

Every schoolboy will vouch for the truth of a marvellous
distinction existing between putting a query, and having to
solve the enigma. Such was my case at the present time;
and had it been feasible, I should have much preferred in-
terrogating the questioner, to being compelled to furnish a
reply, when, in fact, I was ignorant what response to offer.

In my case the matter was the more difficult, since, for the

life of me, I could not furnish the most distant clue to the unravelment of the mystery. Not that my ignorance was to be attributed to want of study, or paucity of cogitation on the subject; since I had been daily put in mind of the difficulty of my task by the appearance of sundry red ink ruled papers, whereon words and figures were strangely mingled together.

Had I been catechised touching the feasibility of starting a railroad from Brighton to Paris, or of carrying on the Thames tunnel to the Wye, I do not hesitate to affirm I should have been able to advance an instantaneous and satisfactory adjustment of the apparent difficulty, on the spot. But the case in point was a very different one indeed, and as the indication of the governor's visage plainly evinced a determination not to be satisfied, be my reply what it might, I wisely held my peace, hoping that the old gentleman, finding it useless to interrogate me further, might eventually feel disposed to make answer himself. Nor was I far from right; for having twice again essayed to extract the desired knowledge from his dutiful son, my worthy and much respected papa shrewdly added, "I suppose you fancy I'm to pay your rascally debts, don't you—eh?"

Another coincidence, thought I. Well, it certainly was singular, and very singular, truly; for I should let the reader know, that whenever the most distant gleam of extrication from my difficulties presented itself to my agitated mind, somehow or other, it was invariably identified with a vision of the governor's cheque-book, and an anticipation of the governor's lecture. But then again, "those rascally debts," as my affectionate relative termed them. Was not *that* strange? such a reciprocity of sentiment between father and son! "Rascally debts!" Why, my generous hearted parent could not by human possibility have better expressed my own exact sentiments as regarded the estimation in which I held the said debts, had he been able to probe into the most secret recesses of my heart.

"Rascally debts." Well, so they were, to all intents and purposes, as far as my will went; but unfortunately, to be effectually consigned to the shades below, it was absolutely necessary they should be defunct, and the bills in question showed most unequivocal signs of existence.

But whether dead or alive, thought I, it matters little now; for since my father has openly avowed his detestation of the whole genus collectively, and without one single exception being taken in their favour, not a vestige of doubt remained on my mind but that he would speedily desire his lawyer to dispose of the whole race, so voluminously piled on my table.

"You think *I'll* pay your debts, I suppose?" again asked my accommodating companion, and as the inquiry then put appeared in the light of what lawyers term a "leading question," I answered as I concluded was expected, with the small monosyllable, "Yes."

"Then you'll find yourself most wofully mistaken," rejoined my father, betraying great solicitude for my extrication from difficulties; and having violently pulled the bell for no apparent purpose than to prove the strength of the rope appended to it, he stalked out of the room by one door, at the instant a servant obeyed the summons by walking in at another.

"Several persons have been inquiring for you, sir," said my domestic, on reaching my own apartments.

"Not the least doubt of *that*," thought I; therefore, entering my chamber with the somewhat antiquated resolve of reaching a decided conclusion as to the best plan of proceeding, for the hundredth time I turned over in my mind every probable and improbable measure, likely to bring about a liquidation of what commercial men term "liabilities."

I should previously have mentioned that, although the sums owing did not amount in value to the total of the national debt, yet was the aggregate sufficiently alarming to a boy of eighteen; since, by some mismanagement at Oxford, or carelessness of my affairs, or probably from both and other reasons combined, I had ample evidence to prove that two thousand pounds would not cover all the demands looked for at my hands; and although I well knew that eventually a large entailed property would be mine, yet was I equally convinced that, at the time I write of, I was not in possession of a five pound note beyond what my father chose to advance, and by this time, I trust, it has been made sufficiently clear that that worthy gentleman possessed very little inclination to favour me with an addenda to my already received and expended allowance.

What was to be done? The people must be paid, or I should actually be mobbed in the streets; and to get rid of their detested importunities, I would willingly have assigned my new cab and saddle horses to the hammer. But what would they produce? Nothing, or at least tantamount to nothing, when compared to what I owed—a mere drop in the ocean—a bagatelle.

How I came to squander such a sum, it would not be easy to explain; but that such *was* the case—at least, that the tradespeople said so—I was at no loss to believe.

Further application to my father was wholly out of the question; not that the payment of treble the sum could in the

slightest degree have interfered with his comforts, or have called forth that forerunner of misery called retrenchment. Nothing of the sort; but from the mistaken idea of letting the offence carry its own punishment, he entailed annoyances on us both, as by perusal may hereafter be perceived.

The predicament in which I was placed was anything but an enviable position, and where to look for help I knew not. Uncles, aunts, cousins of all sizes and degrees, I possessed in abundance, but what would they say, if the heir to the rich man of the family were to ask for the loan of a couple of thousand pounds? Would they lend it?—not they. Some possibly had it not, while those who possessed the power, would indisputably marvel that one so young should have proved so extravagant; others would affirm that they made it a rule never to countenance or connive at a child's opposition to the paternal commands; and many, by way of saving themselves the trouble of making excuses, would have laughed in my face, and persisted in calling it "a hoax."

One person there was, however, who would have parted with the last trinket from her jewel box, rather than I should suffer a moment's pain, and that person—need I write it—was my mother. Had the sum required been twenty thousand instead of two, that dear and beloved parent would have disbursed it without a moment's hesitation; but, alas, she possessed no control over the pecuniary department, independent of her husband, and for what purpose, therefore, should I render her miserable by a detail of grievances which I was confident she had not the power to remedy? Assuredly not. Since the calamity could not be averted by lamenting over my bad fortune, it was just as well not to annoy others with my woes.

I had heard of money lenders, and had read advertisements in the papers inserted through the kindness of that disinterested and most praiseworthy race; but where they dwelt, what might their appearance, dress, manners, and language, was to me as a sealed volume. But according to the turn my affairs were taking, circumstances bid fair for speedily furnishing an opportunity of making their acquaintance, and recollecting that the greatest friend I possessed—my relations excepted—was then stationed with his regiment at Hounslow, the bright idea of requesting his sage assistance was quickly followed up by putting the notion in practice. No sooner had the brilliant notion of seeking advice from Henry Harrington taken possession of my mind, than I resolved to push the experiment to the test forthwith, and putting my determination in practice, I was soon cantering down Rotten Row, *en route* to the abode of my intended adviser.

Where my old friend Harry picked up his information, I cannot venture to explain, but possibly there may be some intuitive link connecting that branch of Government of which he was a member, with the dispensers of wealth, for to my surprise and pleasure I found my ally perfectly *au fait* in all and many the technical terms designating ruin under the appellation of bills, annuities, reversions, and post obits.

At first I thought my friend Harry had entirely mistaken his profession, so easily did he enter into all the pro's and con's connected with borrowing, and such extraordinary zeal did he evince in his endeavours to enlighten my rather clouded understanding on the matter; but all was eventually explained. Harry Harrington was as "hard up" as myself, and as regarded the supplies from home, somewhat similarly placed.

Here then was a coadjutor ready, aye, and most willing to proceed to any extremities whatever, in order to gain possession of a required sum; and having assured me in a confidential strain, that Captain Longhair of his own regiment, "*did them*" out of a cool five thousand pounds the previous week, he requested me to set my mind perfectly at ease, seeing that not a doubt existed but that he could certainly compass anything that so slow a fellow as the Captain had achieved.

Harry Harrington's soothing words had a marvellous effect in setting my agitated mind at rest. By his account I should speedily be put in possession of a sum of money amply sufficient to settle all my debts; the duns would be for ever driven from my sight—and those "rascally bills," as my considerate parent justly styled them, would be paid off; and being paired to their respective receipts, might rest undisturbed at the bottom of some old bureau for ever.

These were pleasing reflections, truly, and so marvellously did my spirits rise in proportion to the contemplation of my debts falling, that I went to mess determined to bear my part "bravely in the fray;" and my aim I imagined was accomplished, since I have a faint recollection of having frequently been assured "I was the best fellow in the world," and a vivid remembrance of an excruciating headache, on the following morning, which only required the obnoxious presence of half a dozen creditors to have placed me in a raging brain fever, with a sufficiency of variety of symptoms to have found amusement for half the students then walking St. George's hospital.

Instead of so obnoxious a result, the remembrance of Harry Harrington's promise of introduction to the money lender, together with copious applications of soda and brandy, put me at length in order; and with the aid of devilled kidneys, grilled turkey gizzards, and every description of fiery *morceau* invented

by cooks, I was at length "made up" for the day, and off we drove to town.

The individual on whom the honour of borrowing his money was to be conferred, dwelt in a small, narrow street at the west end of the town—not that he cared for the gaities therein enacting, but peradventure for the greater facility the *locale* afforded for watching and decoying into his net those whom he judged likely to suit his views.

On knocking at the door belonging to this most worthy member of society, the wooden obstruction preventing our ingress moved slowly back, being thereto propelled by a cord pulled by some person from one of the apartments within. Not a soul did we see on entering the passage or vestibule, which latter contained three doors, one being on either side of the narrow way, and the third, open exactly in our front.

"Come in!" squeaked a small voice from the open apartment, as crossing the threshold, the street door closed upon us. "Come in!" Thus admonished, we advanced toward the room from whence the sound of doubtful welcome issued, and soon found our conjectures not ideal—at least one wretched mortal tenanted the place, and to none other could so dismal a voice have belonged.

It was a small, square apartment, or more properly speaking, it might have been termed a closet, for so contracted were its dimensions, that twelve persons could not possibly have been accommodated with seats within its precincts: the walls might or might not have received a coat of paint or whitewash in the primeval days of the mansion's grandeur, but at the epoch I speak of, nothing but mouldy plaister and long streaks of dirt and damp met the offended eye. There was neither bureau or shelves, no, not even a few law books scattered around—there was not a thing to indicate study or research, if we except the "thin tenement of clay," who, perched on a high stool behind an enormous stand of ink, sedulously plied his labours, which were put in practice for the purpose of copying an apparently interminable deed, having for its purport the transfer of a beautiful property from the hands of a spendthrift into those of one of the numerous gang who, letting out their money at nearly cent. per cent., live and thrive on the folly and vices of inexperience. I've often pondered within myself whether such illgotten wealth eventually adds to the prosperity of those in whose favour it is amassed; and from the instances I am acquainted with, I think it may be fairly stated that the third generation become as poor and penniless as was the first, prior to the developement of the founder's aptitude for accumulation.

But to return. The creature perched upon the elevated stool, presented as ungainly an appearance as could well be imagined. What his age might have been none would have been bold enough to surmise; but that he was exceeding spare in flesh, and most particularly dirty in person, was beyond all manner of question; in short, the pride taken in dress—if indeed such a weakness ever engrossed his attention—was long since numbered among the things “that had been,” while his evident aversion to soap and cleanliness were visibly portrayed on each lineament of his face. His hair was long and black, and apparently suffered to luxuriate in wanton—not curls—but rat’s tails, in whatever direction that ornament to the human head chose to wander, or according to whatever new arrangement was given by the frequent insertion of his fingers through the tangled masses.

From the position in which he sat leaning on his desk, it would have been difficult to guess his height, had he not ever and anon stretched forth his long, skinny limbs, as though to ease them from their confined posture; after which, having elevated his arms, and expanded his mouth and fingers to their utmost length, he gathered in the long folds of his carcase, and with renewed vigour betook himself to his daily task—copy—copy—copy. Such was the sole and monotonous employment in which the money scrivener’s clerk was destined to pass away the greater part of his existence; not the semblance of a variety was discoverable in his work—nothing to interest, nothing to amuse—nothing to relax the mind from the dull and tedious labour at which, from sunrise to long after sunset, the miserable drudge plied at his heavy task—for be it known, the subordinates in an office such as that wherein we stood, received not their pittance in accordance with time expended, but in proportion to the number of lines inserted on the smooth parchment.

As I gazed on the cadaverous countenance of this unprepossessing figure, and beheld the cold apathy with which he regarded our entrance into his den, it appeared to me as though all the usual sympathies common to our nature were dead, or at least hidden within his breast. But possibly, the scenes of suffering which were daily brought before his eye, had steeled what might otherwise have proved a kindlier heart; and having, from long habitude, rooted out all that could claim kindred with the more generous feelings, planted in their stead a perfect indifference to all and every passing event. And, so that his task was fulfilled, by which he was entitled to claim his scanty dole, what cared he who was ruined or who visited the foul atmosphere in which he dwelt, for the purpose of lending out his employer’s ill-gotten wealth, in the hope of amassing more, be the price what it might at which it was to be pur-

chased? Once, and once only, the dull, grey eye of the scrivener was fixed upon my countenance, and it might have been fancy, but I almost convinced myself that I could observe a sort of sneer ruffle the corners of his inanimate looking mouth, as though in derision of the folly which could thus bring two young men—nay, hardly more than boys, to commence their ruin thus early.

I might have continued ruminating on the probable history of this strange being, had not a bell, though none of the loudest, sounded from one of the apartments flanking the passage by which we entered. Without taking his eye off the half-finished sheet of sheepskin spread before him, for one instant, the dingy skeleton slowly placed his pen behind his dexter ear, and applying his hand to a spot, to which, through long practice, it was enabled to travel without aid from the organ of vision, he slowly grasped a pendant cord, to which he administered a deliberate tug. Footsteps were instantly heard in the passage, and having allowed what he seemed to consider a sufficient time for the person going to reach the outer side of the building, he let the cord pass through his hand; the street-door shut with a loud slam; the clerk replaced the pen from his ear to his fingers, and in the next instant the only sound that broke upon the sense, was the scratching effect produced by the resumption of his labours.

I was beginning to get somewhat weary of the scene, and was about to propound some question for elucidation from the mouth of the taciturn scribe, when another bell sounded, apparently from the same apartment whence the former issued, whereupon he of the parchment, slowly raising his matted locks from his desk, pointed to the aforesaid door with his pen, having performed which exploit, he bestowed no further notice on us, but again turned to his all-absorbing task.

Following the direction intimated by the "grey goose-quill," my companion and myself reached the sanctum of the money-lender, the door of which apartment being open, we immediately entered, whereupon, without any visible cause, it instantly shut, though, doubtless, owing to the mechanical department apparently under the direction of the lean and half-starved copyist.

For the first time in my life, I stood in the presence of a professed money-lender, a usurer, who, it was well known, on demanding what he termed his right, care for nothing human or divine, save in so far as to keep his neck unstretched upon his shoulders. To him the mother's prayers, the orphan's wail, the poor man's solicitation for a brief—brief time of mercy, was never replied to but in the cold, chilling,

heartless terms of business. Throughout his whole life—and he was then past forty—in no one instance had it ever been acknowledged that he was swayed by any other feelings save avarice and spite; for to designate the low and sneaking cunning by which he endeavoured, and but too often successfully, to retaliate for supposed injuries, as revenge, would be to dignify the meanest and most contemptible instinct with a cause justly attributed to a passion immeasurably beyond anything which his poor spirit could harbour.

Shylock, notwithstanding his reprehensible predilection for merchant's flesh, was but a novice in the art of usury, compared to my new acquaintance; in proof of which the former tried his best, and failed; the latter did the first, and succeeded. Yet, what matters it? I am not going to enter on a dissertation on money-lenders, much less on this charming specimen in particular; I will merely remark, that the being before whom I then stood, approximated not in the smallest degree to what I fancied a usurer would resemble; for, in the profundity of my ignorance, I was prepared to behold a wizened, beak-nosed wretch, whose bones, protruding through his skin, bespoke the rigid parsimony in which it was his wont to suffer, while that indispensable requisite to all misers and jailors, as portrayed upon the stage—to wit, a large bunch of keys—I also confidently looked for as a certain accompaniment to his costume. Judge then my astonishment, gentle reader, at finding myself in conversation with as sleek and rosy a visaged mortal as I ever remembered to have encountered. His dress was rigidly correct in cut and fashion; while the appearance of starvation, so visible in the clerk, was in no degree participated by the master. But why particularise this prince of usurers and chief of villains? Those who remember George Blackhed, cannot need my pen to refresh their memories, regarding so estimable a unit of the community, while those yet unacquainted with this praiseworthy mortal, need more to be envied than instructed; and with all sincerity I would warn them most strongly against cultivating the acquaintance even of the most *amiable* of the fraternity, for *all are bad*; but if one could by possibility have been singled out as more iniquitous than his compeers, that one was the civil, smooth-spoken, good-humoured looking money-lender then before me.

Although at the fountain head itself, it was no part of the system to allow Harry Harrington and myself to lave in the delicious stream of the well, simply because we had succeeded in tracing its source; quite the reverse, there were preliminaries to be gone through, references to Doctors' Commons to be made, questions asked, lawyers consulted, deeds examined, and finally,

though not the easiest part of the affair, the money was to be found, and when found, it would become necessary to enter into negotiations with the possessor of the coveted ore.

To curtail a long story, George Blackhed most effectually drew from us the names of those persons to whom Harry Harington and myself were principally indebted.

The advantages to be gained thereby to him were of no small moment, yet at the time being unable to fathom Blackhed's purposes, I looked upon him as a most vilified mortal, and I do not feel convinced, had occasion offered, that I would not have stood forth in his behalf as a champion for maligned virtue; fortunately, however, no opportunity was afforded, and consequently I was saved the advantage of making a greater *exposé* of my ignorance than I was then in the act of committing.

The real object this worthy individual had in prospect was simply a benevolent feeling on his part, prompting an immediate interview with our several creditors, not only for the purpose of informing them of the probability existing of their bills being speedily paid, but at the same time hinting that as so desirable a wind-up was to be brought about through *his* agency, he would be glad to know what per centage they would allow for his good services; the said extra bonus being of course added, though not specified under *that* head, to Harry Harington's account in favour of *his* creditors; whilst an equally satisfactory arrangement was to be effected in so insignificant a person as myself, as regarded him.

These little *exposés* I deem it beneficial to make known in this article, yclept "My first Loan," not so much for the purpose of glorying in my own folly, but with the far more laudable desire of impressing upon the minds of all who may, peradventure, in their young days, be tempted to commit those indiscretions which, however trivial, are most indisputably highly reprehensible, to say the least; for the benefit of those among our young friends thus situated, we pen these lines, and from solid practical experience do we know, that so far from gaining the desired object by successful applications to money lenders, the difficulties and miseries eventually to be endured, may be at least reckoned tenfold. My advice therefore is, that should a novice find himself in this very far from desirable position, I would counsel him to lay bare the whole state of the case to the parent or guardian who may have control over his finances; and he may rest assured that, in instances such as I allude to, the first loss will prove the least.

At the same time, I would warn those who may possess the power to relieve, as well as to withhold the asked-for relief, well

and carefully to weigh within their own minds what may eventually be the result of a harsh and forbidding denial. Let them but reflect for one instant that, in the end, the money *must* be paid, the debts contracted *must*, in honor, be liquidated; consequently, let them ask the question of themselves, what good object can be effected by driving the offender forth to seek for aid at the price of ruin to his fortune, and in all probability destruction to himself?

I am not of those who would deride and reprobate all fathers for seeking to check the wayward folly of youth. God forbid; but had I a son myself, I would suffer much ere I would so estrange him from me as to compel him to seek for aid at other hands than mine, knowing, as I must know, that unless he succeeded in attaining his end, his career in life will *probably* be blighted, *certainly* stigmatized. And by whom, and through what course? By his father! and through the refusal of that help when in his first difficulty, which, had it been timely and judiciously afforded, might have pointed out the error of his ways, and weaned him from a course of profligate folly, to become a useful and amiable member of society.

Yet, I had almost written, thank heaven I have no son, but I recant the expression; and should fate hereafter ordain that my rooms in the Albany—which by-the-bye I have tenanted these twenty years—become vacant, and I find myself changed from what is termed a “single” to the opposite, a “double man,” I shall make it my chief and earliest study to impress upon the mind of my progeny—provided and nevertheless, as the lawyers say, I have any—I shall make it my chief study and delight to impress on their minds that so near a road to ruin does not exist as that through the money lender’s ledger, save one—the broad and ever ready highroad—play.

Enough I trust has thus been shown, to convince all who care about the matter, that the way to cleanse the mud from one shoe, is not by placing the other in the dirt; and so would I warn them never to liquidate a debt by obtaining the means of accomplishment through the aid of the usurer, lest they find that the remedy eventually proves considerably worse than the disease.

Full six weeks and upwards *must* have elapsed before my momentous affair was settled; and then was it that, having bound myself to pay into Mr. Blackhed’s hands three thousand pounds at the expiration of seven years, exclusive of no less than six hundred pounds per annum in the meanwhile by way of interest, I was presented with thirteen hundred pounds in notes; the rest having vanished, as by way of magic, at the talismanic words, commissioners, deeds, trouble, consultation,

journey; and, finally, having entered every item which human ingenuity could contrive to bring against me in the shape of a charge, the bill closed with the sweeping and most extensive of all demands, under the general head of "expenses." Those "rascally bills," as my respected sire had thought fit to designate those small specimens of youthful indiscretion, "those rascally bills" indeed. Many and oft were the moments when I asked myself in what terms would he apostrophize the amiable Blackhed, had he been made aware of the kind interest which he, a stranger, had so generously taken in my behalf; but I was by no means anxious that the knowledge of my doating relative should extend so far, and therefore did I exert every means within my power to avert an extension of the worthy gentleman's cognizance of that particular subject.

Thus then, was all confidence at an end between my father and myself, I living in the daily fear of detection. Confident that sooner or later the whole affair must transpire, and with a lively idea of the consequences which in all probability would follow close upon the *denouement*—my existence was anything but passed in that way supposed to be dependant on a mind "tranquil and at ease."

But what made matters worse, was the unenviable certainty that the period for my first payment of a year's interest was at hand; and although the amount was not quite so much as the *principal* had been, how could I expect that sum to be produced by my father, when merely the interest of an amount considerably greater than that with which he had previously, and with such indignation, declared *he never would* pay.

It "never rains but it pours," and so did it prove in my case; for when pondering in the utmost anxiety how to get rid of the horrid incubus which haunted my thoughts by day, and disturbed my dreams by night, my mother proposed a trip to the Continent.

But a short time back, and the very idea of such an expedition would have afforded me unbounded satisfaction, and of all the family, perhaps, the inclination would have been received by none with more heartfelt pleasure than myself. But now, how different was the case! By the tenure of my bond, I was forbid to cross the seas, and to attempt clandestine departure, was to lay my security open to suffer in my stead.

Harry Harrington was with his regiment at Exeter, but even if he had been nearer, of what benefit could he have proved in this my distressing state, unless it were to propose a second edition of the same species of quick destruction of which I had already tasted quite enough to disgust me with the remainder that might still remain in the bottle. No—I was resolved that

come what might, more I would not borrow, even was I certain of the option being afforded, which however was by no means sure.

And this it was that might in a measure have rendered me so particularly virtuous in my resolves ; but good resolutions, however excellent and valuable they may be in the estimation of the possessor, will not pass as ready money in the opinion of those creditors whose craving and diseased appetite demands more substantial food.

At this period, when my cup of annoyances appeared about to run over, an unexpected relief sprang up to aid me, and that blessing, moreover, in the fair form of woman.

But wherefore should I call it a relief, when, like a glimmering vision oft seen amidst the marshy wildernesses of the forest, it only shone to lead me nearer to destruction. But I must be more explicit to render myself intelligible to my readers.

Know then, gentle friends, that owing to contiguity of lands, added to consanguinity of blood, my parents had deemed it advantageous and beneficial to all parties, that an engagement should be formed, and eventually a marriage take place, between the only daughter of our nearest neighbour in the country and my unworthy self. Now it so happened that the lady destined as my partner in life chanced to be most unexceptionably pretty, and therewithal so captivately agreeable, that the first portion of my relations' wishes had long since been brought about, doubtless through an instinctive knowledge of their intentions, by their most dutiful and loving son. Certes, when I was informed of the extent of happiness awaiting my acceptance, I hailed it, not only as the greatest blessing earth could have in store, but also as a welcome and sure means of preventing an *exposé*, by a peremptory refusal to go abroad.

Besides these good and cogent reasons, I well knew, that the very fact of my being about to unite myself with an heiress, would readily purchase the delay of a few weeks at the hands of my merciless tormentors, at the small sacrifice of an equal number of hundreds ; and then, when once married, how easy, how very easy would it be, to pay off the accursed loan, and thus get rid of my friend Blackhed and his myrmidons for ever.

Full of these thoughts, I again sought the den where yet reposed the thin, unwashed clerk in all the luxury of solitude, dirt, and parchment ;—again the door spun back without perceptible cause upon its hinges, and again I stood in the presence of the usurer.

My story was soon told ; but when I came to urge upon the notice of the moneylender that what I stated was in every particular correct, I might have spared myself that part of my

oration at least, since the listener was as fully acquainted with all particulars thereunto appertaining, as was the detailer.

So prominently evident were the advantages desirable to Mr. Blackhed, by a trifling delay in the settlement of our accounts, that I experienced not the least difficulty in effecting a further postponement of our final arrangement, which business having been satisfactorily agreed on, I flew back to the idol of my soul—discarding from my thoughts every outline of the figure of usurers, bailiffs, and deeds.

I need not have been in so violent a hurry however, as it turned out, and better would it have proved to me had I never retraced my steps to that house, where I had fondly anticipated I should eventually enjoy such lasting and unalloyed felicity. Instead of any such condemnation, it was decreed that I was to come forth from the paternal dwelling one of the most miserable mortals in life; and thus it was.

There is, or rather *was*—since in these days of rapid alteration and improvement it is hard to reckon on the durability of anything, even for the shortest period; but whatever may be the case *now*, there *was* in ancient days, a narrow, dirty thoroughfare in London, well known by the cognomen of Chancery Lane; it stood but a little distance from Temple Bar, and close to the vicinity of those miraculous figures at St. Dunstan's church, to witness whose feats of striking the hour with their metal clubs, cost many an unwary gazer dear. But St. Dunstan, and his awe-inspiring figures are now no more; and what guarantees have we, therefore, that Chancery-lane has not likewise passed away? If such be the case, pity it is that the removal of the dirty masses of brick and mortar which composed that most execrable of all streets, had not been demolished prior to the date I write of. But, alas! no such good fortune was in store for me.

The abominable and uneven pavement, ever choked up with mouldering hackney-coaches, and dismal looking lawyers' clerks, flourished in all the plenitude of what, in London, has been so aptly termed "blacks" and fog.

It was towards a dark and forbidding entrance of a gloomy looking building, almost half way up the street, that a cadaverous object, in appearance twin brother to my friend Blackhed's clerk, bent his steps. Two much worn and broken steps led from the muddy causeway to the portal, when, having crossed it, the strange man pushed open a heavy and unhandled baised door, which in the palmy days of its youth might, some forty years since, have gloried in the name of green. Now, however, it had become a brown, save where, here and there, a rent in its outward covering gave intimation from the reverse side, that at some former period it had boasted of a brighter hue.

That passed, the man of business entered a small, close, and dark room, where many persons, bent on the same errand as himself, were following up their vocation. For be it known, that the aspirant to legal knowledge then and there standing, was one of the clerks appertaining to the attorney who transacted the business of my intended father-in-law; and the mansion wherein for the time being he had his living was neither more nor less than the spot well known as the register office.

Many and many a time had I passed that accursed building, and little did I imagine that within the ponderous pages of the musty volumes heaped on its cobwebbed shelves, the whole front of my offending, as regarded the ill-fated annuity, was inscribed. But so it was, and moreover, with all and full particulars of the transaction set down, without the slightest reservation, if we except that portion which, as it might not inaptly, in some shape or other, have clashed with the usury laws, my foresighted friend, Blackhed, had omitted to transcribe. For, to make good and valid all deeds such as mine, the law wills that the same be entered in that office within a given period after the signatures of the contracting parties have been affixed.

It was not with the slightest suspicion of the discovery about to take place, that orders were issued for ascertaining whether or not honourable mention was made of my name in the leaves of the ponderous tomes already mentioned. But I was afterwards informed that all good and active attorneys, when employed in drawing up marriage settlements, make it their business to ascertain, as far as in them lies, whether the other contracting power be hampered with what is technically termed "incumbrances" or not.

With this praiseworthy motive, the officious man of business despatched his clerk on the ill-fated errand, and but a brief period sufficed to place the attorney in full possession of my secret.

Astonished at what he well knew his client had not the most remote conception of, he instantly set inquiries on foot, and in almost a less period than it takes me to relate the fact, the persevering wretch gleaned from that traitor, Blackhed, the sum total of my debts; and the full amount of my iniquities was summed up with the grand item of having contracted the marriage agreement for the sole purpose of liquidating my debts with the money of my intended bride, "not caring," as the well informed lawyer thought fit to inform her father, "one farthing for the girl, so that I possessed her gold."

Here was a case of unparalleled duplicity and heartless

selfishness laid bare. What could more plainly prove my utter worthlessness and depravity than the facts so unfortunately brought to light in time to save the intended victim from a fate worse than death, that of being linked for life to a mean and unprincipled villain? Nothing could be plainer, nothing more palpably true; and now that my enormities were brought to light, and my dreadful wickedness expatiated upon, there was not one of the poor girl's relations who did not suddenly call to mind at least a score of instances, whereby it was beyond dispute evident, that I had never cared one farthing for my intended, further than as the possessor of wealth.

Long, long years have passed since that dreadful day; but the recollection of the agony I suffered when those foul accusations were hurled at the offender can never be wiped from my remembrance.

To be stigmatized as a spendthrift, gambler, and adventurer, were each bad enough by themselves; but to be told I cared not one iota for her whom I doated on more than life itself; to be taunted to my face with the accusation that I possessed not one spark of kindly feeling towards that woman, whom to render happy I would with alacrity have undergone any suffering, any privation on earth, was beyond my power to bear. At first I was dumb from astonishment, and replied not to the overwhelming charges brought against me; but, as reflection came to my aid, and showed the awful precipice on which I stood, and what the inevitable consequences must be, if I allowed the slanderers to depart unanswered, I endeavoured to suppress my rapidly rising wrath, and demanded that my intended wife should be permitted to be present, when I felt confident of being able satisfactorily to disprove the crimes laid to my charge, though unable to turn aside the pretty well merited verdict of imprudence. But no such thing: the discovery, they said, had fortunately been effected; their dear child, through the intervention of a merciful providence, was rescued from perdition, and never, never more would they consent to hold further communion with a wretch so base and so depraved as I had incontestably proved myself to be.

Thus melted my vision of happiness away, to be rebuilt—never!

Finding all my prayers and entreaties ineffectual, I at length assumed a bolder tone, and tried to meet their calumnies with retort: but what could I expect to gain by that—unless it were further and more effectually to exasperate the very people whom it was evidently my interest to conciliate? But in the paroxysm of anger these reflections came not to my aid. In the excess of my wrath I answered accusation with accusation, abuse with

abuse, until, worked up into a state of actual phrenzy, I swore, in presence of her kindred, that I would marry my betrothed wife in spite of the whole phalanx of my calumniators; and, having heaped upon their heads every malediction that a fertile and highly excited imagination could suggest, I rushed from the scene of my agony, and hardly knowing in what direction I passed, I turned towards my father's house.

There again was I destined to undergo a second edition of the same scene.

The blame, the fault, was of course laid solely to me. I, and I alone, was the culprit. It was through me that the darling project of my parents was thus shut out for ever; through my base conduct my cup of happiness had been dashed to the ground, and the bitterest gall proffered in its stead. Almost to madness was I goaded on, until, losing all command over myself, I boldly accused my parent of having been the primary cause of all this misery, by refusing to pay for me those debts which he was well aware must eventually be settled.

I cannot now call to mind the precise words which I uttered nor can I remember half the sentiments to which, in my anger I gave vent: certain it is that, never, until that moment, had I given such unlicensed utterance to the dictates of passion.

There was no deceit then, I spoke as I felt; and much as I now regret having allowed such an ebullition of temper to escape, at the moment I was incapable of judging between right and wrong.

As I proceeded in my invectives, and by degrees lashed myself into a state of phrenzy, I recapitulated the evils that had occurred, the miserable days, the sleepless nights which had become my portion, the increasing agony which had for so long past been my lot; and I dated the origin of all my woes from the commencement of my distress consequent upon debt, up to the great overwhelming calamity which had that day befallen, from one period alone, viz., the hour when my father refused to attend to my entreaties, answering my acknowledgment of error, and promise of amendment, with the well-remembered sentence, "Ill luck to your bills!"

Whether or not the said bills, out of compliment to my father, were duly condemned, I cannot take upon me to decide, but it was very clear that his dearly-beloved son was in the highway of rendering himself eligible for a similar distinction; and it would be difficult to state the exact limit at which I might have been inclined to check my not very complimentary style of speech, had not the ungovernable fury into which I worked myself, furnished the every line of which I stood so much in need.

Briefly, then, what between the conflicting emotions which at that moment swayed me with a force as irresistible as strong, and the sudden revulsion occasioned by the dreadful shock of being hurled from the pinnacle of happiness to the depths of despair, I felt my brain turn giddy, the room wherein we stood appeared to swim round, a ringing sound rushed through my ears, a stream of gore burst from my mouth, and the next moment I lay senseless on the floor. I had burst a bloodvessel.

* * * * *

My debts have been long since paid, but till the hour of his death, that reciprocity of kindly feeling which had formerly existed between my father and myself, was never re-awakened.

I am now an old man, the possessor of all that property; the hundredth part of which might, had it been so decreed, have made me very different from what I am. But wherefore do I repine? The motive which withheld the succour, indisputably had its origin in a good, though mistaken notion; but while I blame my ill-judging parent, it should ever be remembered, that had not my own indiscretion and extravagance, in the first instance, paved the way to my after misery, the long years of useless lamentation and regret which subsequently became mine, never would have come to pass.

From my mother I heard, during my convalescence, that months had fled by, since the dreadful interview with my father occurred; and many more were the tedious, heavy weeks, ere I was permitted to leave my room.

I know not, nor, indeed, did I ever ask, what might have been the fate of that fair girl, who had been destined to be my wife. Yet it was not from apathy, or any change of affection towards the object of my earliest—my only love; far, far otherwise! I knew that, whatever the impression on her mind might have been, it would have proved worse than useless, had I prosecuted my suit in after times, when, as a confirmed invalid, I was compelled—as indeed I ever have been since—to rest content within the small boundary prescribed by my physicians as the limit of my wanderings, or be compelled to go forth in an easy chair, propelled by a pampered hireling. Would I have been justified, under these circumstances, in disturbing the tranquillity of that loved object, when nothing but a renewal of misery could result? Would that have been the means whereby to prove my still ardent affection and regard? God forbid. I ask not, neither would I thank the lips that told me, whether she be yet living; and if so, whether, like myself—nearly at the termination of her pilgrimage—alone—or, if surrounded by the blooming countenances of prattling groups of children, aye, and grandchildren possibly besides! The last time I gazed on that

lovely form, seems as though at this moment she stood before me radiant in beauty, beaming with all the kind and gentle affections of a woman who knows neither happiness nor peace, unless it be shared with him whom her young and pure heart had singled out from the many, whose sole object had been to obtain the honour of her notice.

As she was then, so, to my mind's eye, does she appear now. Then wherefore, I again ask, should I seek to scare away the only sunny resting-place whereon my mind cares to dwell, to replace the vision, fallacious though it be, with the sad reality of wrinkles and of age?

Such is not my will:—rather let me bask in the glorious sunshine of my ideal fancy. Let me live over again in imagination that blest, though brief period of felicity, and when at last I shake off this “mortal coil,” I trust to meet her again as beautiful and good—even as when last we parted.

NOVEMBER.

A SONNET.

YET one smile more, departing, distant sun !
 One mellow smile through the soft vapoury air,
 Ere, o'er the frozen earth, the loud winds run,
 Or snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare.
 One smile on the brown hills and naked trees,
 And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
 And the blue gentian flower, that, in the breeze,
 Nods lonely, of her beauteous race the last.
 Yet a few sunny days, in which the bee
 Shall murmur by the hedge that skirts the way,
 The cricket chirp upon the russet lea,
 And man delight to linger in thy ray.
 Yet one rich smile, and we will try to bear
 The piercing winter frost, and winds, and darken'd air.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

WALES, AND THE WELSH.

A GLANCE at the Map of England teaches those of us, who did not know it by actual experience, that the extent of land we call Wales is washed on three sides by the Bristol and St. George's Channel and the Irish sea, and on the other is divided from England by a boundary consisting of mountains and rivers, more or less defined. The tract of land thus set apart occupies an area of some 8,000 square miles, or about 5,000,000 acres. Of it, and its inhabitants, we English know but little. Those who visit it are generally birds of passage, who gaze hurriedly on the mountain scenery of North Wales, and then hasten back to the more genial and better cultivated plains of Old England. Unfortunately, circumstances of late have attached to it an unenviable degree of notoriety, and the chartists at Newport; the Rebecca riots; the Commissioners and the Blue Books have invested the land with a yet greater interest than that which had been excited by its cloud-clapt mountains, or its ruins wild and hoar. If the land be remarkable, yet more remarkable are the men by whom that land is tilled. An unconquered race are they. From their rugged rocks they have gazed on Saxon and Norman, on the vicissitudes of English history, whilst they have remained unchanged. They still speak a tongue we cannot speak. They boast a blood, little of which can be detected in Saxon veins; and, though governed by the same laws, and represented in the same parliament as ourselves, they still cling to the traditions of ancient glory, and still aspire to a nationality, the realization of which every day becomes a more hopeless dream.

To put his countrymen right with the British public, to make out for them a better character than the Blue Books gave them, Sir Thomas Phillips has published a work on Wales,* which, though a little prosy, will well repay the perusal of the English reader. The information it contains we now propose to extract and condense. We begin with the beginning, and first refer to the population which, in 1841, was as follows:—North Wales, 396,320; South Wales, excluding Glamorgan, 344,095; Monmouth and Glamorgan, 305,543; the total being 1,045,958. Of this the Welsh, or native population, may be estimated at 700,000. But the time seems far distant when their tongue shall have died out. It is spoken still by almost all the labouring class. It clings with undying pertinacity to the soil. The stranger is greeted with it directly he leaves the towns. Even

* Wales: the Language, Social Condition, Moral Character, and Religious Opinions of the People considered in their relation to Education. By Sir Thomas Phillips. London: J. W. Parker, Strand.

those who can speak English fluently lay aside that language when they meet each other, and converse in the tongue in which Lewelyn harangued his followers previous to the contest in which Welsh independence was for ever destroyed. Double the number of persons now speak Welsh who spoke that language in the reign of Elizabeth. "Such," says Thierry, "is the present state of this population and language, which the bards of the sixth century daringly prophesied should be eternal. If that prediction is to be falsified, it will not be, at least, in our day. The Cambrian dialect is still spoken by a sufficiently large number of people to render it impossible to foresee the period of its total extinction"; and every day greater attempts are made to preserve a tongue the Welsh hold so dear. Of the social condition of the Welsh, Sir Thomas thus speaks: "It is influenced by the configuration of the country, for the most part abrupt and broken into hill and valley; the elevation of the upper mountain ranges which are the loftiest in South Britain, and the large proportion of waste and barren land; the humidity of the climate; the variety and extent of the mineral riches in certain localities, and the great length of the sea-coast, forming numerous bays and havens; and thus there is presented much variety in the occupation, and remarkable contrasts in the means of subsistence and habits of life of the people. Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, and the southern extremity of Breconshire, are the seat of the iron and coal trades. In the western part of Glamorganshire, around Swansea, and in the south-eastern corner of Carmarthenshire, copper ore, imported from Cornwall as well as from foreign countries, is smelted in large quantities; and the same neighbourhood is the seat of potteries, at which an inexpensive description of earthenware is made. Coal in limited quantities, and of a particular description, is exported from Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, and lead-ore and quarries of slate are worked in Cardiganshire. In North Wales considerable masses of people are collected around the copper mines of Anglesea; amidst the slate quarries opened in the lofty mountains of Carmarthenshire and Merionethshire, as well as in some of the sea-ports of these counties; amongst the lead mines of Flintshire, and the coal and iron districts which extend from the confines of Cheshire, through Flintshire and Denbighshire, to the confines of Merionethshire; and in nine parts of Montgomeryshire, on the banks of the Severn, where flannel weaving prevails. The larger portion of the industrial population of North Wales, and of the counties of Cardigan, Carmarthen, Badnor, and Pembroke, in South Wales, is engaged in agriculture. It consists, for the most part, of small farmers; a frugal and cautious race of men, employing but few

labourers, and cultivating, by means of their own families and a few domestic servants, the lands on which they reside." The great stone and coal field of South Wales, which has been estimated at one hundred miles in length, from Pontypool on the east to St. Bride's Bay on the west, embracing a large area of varying extent in the counties of Brecon, Monmouth, Glamorgan, Carmarthen, and Pembroke, is, however, peopled by a different race of men. The workmen in these districts are not Welsh alone, but are collected from every part of England and Ireland. Such men nowhere are a very moral or intelligent class. The tastes and habits of such men everywhere are low, degraded, sensual; and not more so in Wales than elsewhere. Nor is the general moral character of the Welsh inferior to the English.

It is true, the Commissioners state "that poetical and enthusiastic warmth of religious feeling, careful attendance upon religious services, zealous interest in religious knowledge, the comparative absence of crime, are found side by side with the most unreasoning prejudices or impulses, an utter want of method in thinking and acting, and what is far worse, with a wide-spread disregard of temperance, whenever there are the means of excess—of chastity, of veracity, and of fair dealing." But we fear the same remarks might be applied to similar classes in England. It is clear, from the Registrar General's reports, that there are as many illegitimate births in England as in Wales; and it is very certain that, with the exception of towns which may be called English colonies, there is far less of prostitution there than with us, and the criminal returns are far more favourable to Wales than to England. "Small," says Sir Thomas Phillips, "as is the number of convictions in Wales and Monmouthshire, in proportion to those in England, how much more favourable is the comparison for Welshmen when we exclude the crimes in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire, counties where, as has been said, a large immigration takes place from England and Ireland—since the convictions for those two counties, with a population of 304,543, equal the convictions for the other parts of the Principality, with a population of 740,415." Hence it is apparent the Welsh are better than they are represented by the famous Reports of 1847.

From considering the morals of a people, we naturally proceed to consider their religious character. This has given rise to a vehement controversy. Welsh blood was fired, and even at this distance of time, the storm has not subsided into a calm. If to go to church be an essential of Christianity, then are the Welsh heathens beyond all doubt; for church they never attend. In time past they have never done so, and there is

not the slightest probability to suppose that in time to come they ever will. The Episcopalian Church in Wales has always been an alien establishment—the church of the aristocracy, of the English residents—but never the church of the Welsh. They crowd the Methodist chapel, where in a simpler manner, and with a ruder speech, they offer the God of heaven a homage equally heartfelt and sincere. The State church in Wales is represented as poor, and poor it is, compared with that of England. But that it is not altogether destitute, we gather from the Report of the National Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who thus represent its revenues:—Bishoprics, £13,586; Cathedral and collegiate churches, £2,978; Dignitaries, £4,991; Archdeaconries, £4,156; Benefices, with cure of souls in South Wales, £59,301; Ditto, in North Wales, £60,476. Thus, the church of a remnant of the population possesses property to the amount of £141,448, and the number who benefit by this is very small. Sir Thomas Phillips evidently underrates the number of dissenters, and exaggerates that of churchmen. The four dioceses, Llandaff, St. David's, Bangor, and St. Asaph, contain about 1,100 churches and chapels of ease. The Rev. William Jones, vicar of Nevin, Caernarvonshire, gives the number of Churches, 1000; Clergymen, 840; and Attendants, 200,840. This estimate, which is considered by some as exaggerated, does not include Monmouthshire. Far more numerous are the Welsh Nonconformists, who have been in the land since 1634, when Mr. Enbury, of Cardiff, and Walter Cradoc, his curate, were ejected from their churches for refusing to read the royal proclamation, sanctioning the "Book of Sports." They are divided into various denominations. The Independents have 650 chapels, 315 ministers, 60,000 communicants, and 128,000 attendants. The Baptists have 445 chapels, 240 ministers, 35,100 communicants, and 70,200 attendants. The Presbyterians are a very small body; they consist of not more than 3,500 attendants, 26 ministers, and 30 chapels. The most numerous sect in Wales is that of the Calvinistic Methodists, with whose early history is associated the memory of some of the names most known in connexion with the spread of religion in Wales. They have 805 chapels and stations, 160 ministers, 260 preachers, 1,800 leaders, 52,600 communicants, and 140,000 attendants. The Wesleyans have not long been in Wales. They commenced their labours there in 1800, when missionaries from the English Conference preached in Welsh, in different parts of the country. They are stated to have 470 chapels and rooms, 114 ministers, 410 preachers, 13,760 communicants, and 35,000 attendants. It is thus apparent the dissenters are far more numerous in Wales than the church-going population. In the

towns where you see one church, a dozen chapels can generally be shown. Unlike many churchmen we have come in contact with, Sir Thomas Phillips has no disposition intentionally to conceal the facts of the case. He is ready to concede that the majority, and in some districts "a very large majority of the inhabitants belong to some or other of the various dissenting communities, which there abound."

Religion and education in Wales grow side by side—products of the same soil. The state-church has funds for this purpose, which have been shamefully misapplied; but lately, voluntarism amongst dissenters and church-people has made up for the defect on the part of the church.

Sir Thomas Phillips gives no estimate as to the number of children in church or dissenting schools in Wales. Mr. Evan Jones, in his *Facts and Figures illustrative of the Dissent and Morality of Wales*, put down 110,043 as the number of children receiving daily instruction. The Sunday schools in connexion with Dissent contain, on the same authority, 225,872. The same author says, "The anxiety of the people for education renders any Government scheme unnecessary. The Welsh are determined to educate themselves. The very simplicity of the houses in which the schools are kept, the eagerness with which a good teacher is everywhere supported, and the very large number which exists of private schools (681, probably without a parallel in the history of a labouring population), amply prove the truth of my assertion. The church, with the assistance of the aristocracy, endowments, and grants from the Committee of Council, has provided 581 schools; whilst the almost unaided exertions of the poor have established no less than 949!" The Blue Books convey a very different idea. They shew a state of education only removed from ignorance the most intense; but it must be remembered, the children were examined in an unfamiliar tongue; the Commissioners did not understand Welsh. Hence, the children were seen under great disadvantage, and the Reports of the Commissioners are more highly coloured than was warranted by the facts of the case.

We now take leave of Sir Thomas Phillips. Had he shortened his volume; had he been less liberal in his extracts, and a little livelier in his style, he would have conferred an additional obligation on his readers, who, in Wales, we fear, will not be so numerous as they ought; though they are the very men to whom it may do good; for undoubtedly it is true, whatever be the cause, that, as our author observes, there has been created "in Wales a spirit of isolation from England, to which sectarian agencies actively working through various channels, have largely ministered. In ordinary times this result might be disregarded; but at a period of the world's history when the pro-

cess of decomposition is active amongst nations, and phrases which appeal to the sympathies of a race become really mischievous, it behoves those very excellent persons who claim Wales for the Welsh, to consider whether they are prepared to give up England for the English, and to relinquish the advantage which a poor province enjoys by its union with a rich kingdom. For generations Welshmen have been admitted to an equal rivalry with Englishmen, as well in England as in those colonial possessions of the British crown which have offered so wide a field for enterprise, and secured such ample rewards by provident industry ;—and whether, at the bar, or in the senate, or in the more stirring feats of war, they have obtained a fair field, and won honourable distinction.” This is very sensible ; but will it do the Welsh good ? Will the Celts, hot-headed and yellow-haired, condescend to learn so wholesome a truth ? Will they throw aside the little petty jealousies which most of them feel, and learn that co-operation is better than rivalry, and that better than the advancement of a race is the advancement of the world ?

As thorough Englishmen, we have an objection to a pure race. Such perpetual breeding in and in causes it to degenerate. The men become less manly, and the women less fair. This, which is true of Ireland, is equally exemplified in Wales. There are but few fine-looking men amongst the Morgans, the Davies’s, the Thomas’s, and Jones’s of the Cambrian hills. Like their ponies and mutton, they run small ; and there are mental peculiarities about the Welsh which we do not think it desirable to perpetuate. They are, as is well known, somewhat irascible. They are too apt to take offence where none is intended ; to fret and frown when there is no occasion ; to do as children are very apt to do, that is, cry out before they are hurt. They fancy—for it can be but fancy—that we do not justice to their talents ; that we underrate their virtues ; that, in short, whilst we feel our inferiority, we endeavour to conceal it by proclaiming theirs. Now this is altogether wrong. John Bull is far more good-natured than they imagine ; and when a Welshman talks of his virtues, of his generosity, of his poetry, John takes him at his word ; though little of it will he find, if he ever sets foot in Wales itself. Wales is poetical ; the people are not, save in the lowest manner ; their only romance is their prose ; there they do certainly soar far beyond the dull realities of life. Of themselves and their friends, of their neighbours’ man-servant and maid-servant, even of their neighbours’ ox and ass, they speak invariably in the language of highflown eulogy. They constantly employ superlatives. It is long before the Sassenach learns that he has to make a very liberal allowance for

Cambrian modes of speech. At assize-courts frequently amusing illustrations of this kind of gasconade are met with. The writer was once present when a woman was examined as a witness. Amongst other questions she was asked if the defendant could write. "Yes, nobly," was the ready reply. It turned out that the woman could not write herself, and that she did not know the handwriting of the man of whose caligraphy she had spoken in terms so warm. But she was a Welsh woman, and she gave a Welsh answer: and this taint runs through everything Welsh—it is especially visible in their religion—one would think them the salt of the earth—yet after all they sin like other folk. But the worst consequence of this inflated mode of speaking and thinking is, that it renders them too satisfied with themselves—that it takes away from them all desire of improvement—that it checks their progress in the most effectual manner. In everything they are behind the English—their towns—their farms—their cattle and equipages—their modes of life—all carry us back a hundred years. The South Wales railway will be opened next March from Chepstow to Swansea, that is to be hoped will make them open their eyes, and move a little faster.

We think the time is approaching when the cry for Welsh nationality, now raised by a few amateurs anxious to acquire a little easy popularity, will die a natural death. The man of opulence can afford to raise such a cry, but the poor Welshman, who is thus deluded, finds himself, owing to this circumstance, at a disadvantage in the labour-market. With the English labourer he is thus rendered unable to compete, consequently the employment he can obtain is less lucrative and more severe. The gentlemen with broad acres, and dilettanti ladies who thus foster this feeling, do really hurt the country they profess to love, as well as oppose the catholicism of feeling, which is now, we rejoice to write, increasingly pervading the spirit of the age. We are members one of another—in each others' prosperity and adversity we share. Not a day passes but Wales becomes more valuable for the mineral wealth she contains; and the union of Wales and England—the infusion of Celtic and Saxon blood—of Welsh fire and English sense, will create a race far nobler—far abler to aim at the world's welfare—far more fitted to satisfy the wants of the age, than either Welsh or English themselves. Let the Welshman lay aside the ideas which those who ought to have known better, have endeavoured to infuse. Let him hail the Saxon as his brother—as his fellow-labourer in all great deeds and thoughts—and the result will be that, beautiful as Wales is, she will be yet more beautiful, by man's indomitable skill; and that moral and industrious as the Welsh are, a race yet still more industrious, yet more moral, yet nobler, will dwell in its secluded glens, or climb its lofty hills.

J. E. R.

ERIN.—A SONG.

O ERIN, awaken ! hymn far o'er the land
 Thy advent of triumph, thy right to command
 Our sympathies now in thy smiles and thy tears,
 Unclouded good wishes for happier years.

Long, long has a gloom overspread thy green Isle,
 Vain visions of glory proclaim'd the while ;
 Bad counsels enslaved thee to bloodshed and war ;
 Thine own sons enchained thee to false Freedom's car.

True Goddess of Liberty ! smile on thine own ;
 Speak peace to thy subjects ; bid Discord begone ;
 Arise from the deep, and unveil thy fair brow,
 Encircled with evergreen olive-leaves now.

O be it thy boast and thy praise, 'mid the gloom
 Which o'ershadows this Age, like Night from the tomb,
 That warnings are heeded, that Pæans arise,
 By thankful hearts wafted to unclouded skies.

The harvest in plenty o'er hill-side and dale
 Has hushed the heart-outcry, the lone widow's wail ;
 The Destroyer, death-stricken, has fled from thy shore ;
 Peace and Hope, greenly waving, blossom once more.

Oh ! long may their first-fruits gleam bright in the sun,
 All England, rejoicing thy chaplet is won ;
 Hand in hand, re-united, range round our Queen,
 No home-rending discord to part us again.

Then, Erin, awaken ! let Industry be
 Thy motto, thy bulwark : unfettered, and free,
 Thou wilt shine o'er the ocean, a beacon and star,
 To nations all tempest-tost, warring afar.

C. E. NUGENT.

THE SECRETARY.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK," "GUARDS, HUSSARS, AND
INFANTRY," "THE BEAUTY OF THE RHINE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

KING HENRY.—Lords, give us leave, the Prince of Wales and I
Must have some private conference."

KING HENRY IV., PART I.

LONG before Lord Dropmore left his apartment the following morning, he received a message from the marquis, requesting to see him previous to his leaving the house for the day, an invitation which the young nobleman could willingly have dispensed with, but which he did not feel himself quite at liberty to decline. Revolving, therefore, in his mind the various modes in which it was most probable he would be assailed by his irritated parent, but, as in similar cases, not one of which in the slightest degree approached reality, Lord Dropmore proceeded to the interview.

The marquis was seated in the library, alone, at the moment his son entered, but a door at the further end of the apartment being in the act of then closing, proclaimed that some person had but that instant left the room. The countenance of the peer bore visible evidence of displeasure, when, having pointed to a seat, which was accordingly appropriated by the new comer, Lord Blanchard at once opened upon the subject uppermost in his mind.

Without circumlocution, or the slightest hesitation, he at once enumerated the various reports then in circulation, respecting a contemplated union taking place between his auditor and some affluent unknown; not—as he assured his listener—that he put the slightest faith in such rumours, neither could he believe it possible that a man of Lord Dropmore's high descent would at any moment so far forget what was due to the peerage

and to himself as to enter on so unjustifiable an act. Still, such was the story widely circulated and readily credited about town, and therefore it was that Lord Blanchard repeated the tale, with a view of affording opportunity for instant confutation of the calumny.

"In fact, Dropmore," continued the peer, "you are so fully aware of my inveterate dislike to these *disunions*, as I may term them, that it were worse than useless were I to repeat my unchangeable determination never to pardon so great a dereliction from the right and only path which in these matters ought, and, I doubt not, ever will, influence your conduct.

"Indeed, my only motive in thus alluding to so improbable a *mésalliance* is to enable me hereafter unreservedly to contradict the report. Now let the matter rest. But our unexpected meeting, last evening, and the confusion under which you evidently laboured on witnessing my sudden approach, has caused me no inconsiderable uneasiness. I have lived too long in the world to suppose that any parental authority can eventually check the follies—to call them by no harsher name—to which all young men are subjected, and from which but very few escape; yet I cannot but regret that, however unwittingly, your cousin was unfortunately made a witness of the *exposé*, and agitated and wholly deprived of self-command as you were at the time, the only course left me to pursue was to turn aside, with a badly acted appearance of unrecognition. But although not a word on the subject passed Emily's lips, her change of countenance betrayed her recognition of yourself. Now, Dropmore, perhaps you may not object to say who the lady was?"

Had Lord Dropmore possessed one spark of generosity or ingenuousness, now would have been the period for at once declaring the entanglement in which he so unfortunately was involved, and in which originated the cause of his being on the very verge of perpetrating an act, the fulfilment of which his father had but just reprobated in such decided terms.

What the result of such a proceeding might have been, it were vain to conjecture; for, unpossessed of any real strength of mind, and ever accustomed to view his own comfort and temporary convenience as paramount to all besides, the young nobleman taxed his ingenuity to devise some story or excuse by which, for the time being, all suspicion might be lulled, wholly regardless of the injury which such a line of conduct might entail on her whom, but the evening previous, he had offered to make his wife, and unmindful of the deviation from the character of a gentleman which any premeditated prevarication must unavoidably inflict.

Assuming, therefore, an expression of surprise, Lord Drop-

more coolly demanded of his father what there was so very extraordinary in the circumstance of his having been seen walking with a lady, at no great distance from town. "Indeed, my lord," he continued, "I really cannot discover any occasion for thus taking a trivial matter so seriously to heart; neither is it very complimentary either to the lady in question or myself that doubts and suspicions should arise without any apparent foundation whatever. With regard to Miss Beecher," and this was the first time he had ever appended that monosyllable before her name, when speaking of Emily to his father, "with regard to Miss Beecher, I beg to express my regret if, by any unintentional act of mine, she can have suffered a moment's uneasiness; but for some time I have rejected the supposition that the slightest interest could be felt in my behalf from that quarter, and I think I am not far wrong in supposing that the meeting of last evening was not so entirely accidental as you seem to imagine."

"Not accidental, Dropmore?" replied the marquis, in astonishment. "As far as I am concerned it was perfectly so, the simple fact being that, at the suggestion of Emily, I ordered an early dinner, for the express purpose of enjoying a drive to Greenwich, with the intention of strolling about the park, but most assuredly not in the expectation of meeting you there."

"And at whose instigation, if I may inquire, was this rural expedition entered on?" asked Lord Dropmore.

"At Emily's," was the reply.

"Not at your secretary's?" inquired the other, as if not quite satisfied with the response.

"Decidedly not, Dropmore," was the answer; "and now you mention him, allow me to ask in what way Mr. Garston can by possibility have offended you, seeing you seize every opportunity of slighting him in public, and invariably treat him with marked unkindness when at home. What can the lad have done to annoy you?"

"Me: oh, nothing, my lord," sneeringly replied the son. "What *can* Mr. Garston possibly have done to offend me, who never exchanged a dozen words with him in my life?"

"That is the very thing I complain of," rejoined the marquis. "Frederick Garston saved my life. I brought him to my house; I have carefully studied his character, and closely watched his conduct, and with both I have good reason to be satisfied; and yet, so far from appearing sensible of the value of his services towards myself, you evidently harbour a rooted aversion towards him,—but why, I cannot divine. But, be the cause what it may, I pronounce it groundless."

"Your lordship is at present so wholly wrapt up in this new

addition to your establishment," replied the son, "that anything which I may advance would, I fear, have but small weight when balanced against Mr. Garston's influence. But, possibly, he may shortly be portrayed in his true and real colours."

"I am no dealer in ambiguous threats and mysterious warnings, Dropmore," replied the marquis, "and therefore decline further discussion on the point, since, if you have anything whereof to accuse Garston, openly divulge the charge, and give him opportunity of explanation, and as he comes forth from the ordeal so let him receive his award. But enough of this. Now, Dropmore, have you any objection to say who the lady was, leaning on your arm in the park at Greenwich, last evening?"

"The intended wife of Sir George Elms," unblushingly answered the son, "and the rich heiress whom, in its kindness, the world has thought proper to bestow on me."

"And is that the mystery?" exclaimed the father, delighted beyond measure at the explanation. "But how came you there, Dropmore? Where was Sir George?"

"The fact is," replied the other, gaining fresh confidence, the farther he fancied himself from detection, "the fact is, I went to Greenwich with a party, at the express desire of my friend, Sir George, it being arranged that from that day the declaration of his engagement should be made public."

"I saw no party, Dropmore," replied the marquis; "surely when I met you no other persons were nigh."

"True, my lord," he replied; "but your secretary was fully aware that there *was* a party. And, moreover, to make the matter sure, he thought proper to thrust himself into the room where my friends were sitting, for the laudable purpose, as I conjecture, of ascertaining whether I had yet left the house."

"What earthly object could Garston have had in that?" asked the nobleman.

"Nay, my lord," was the reply, "I can but speak to facts, not to motives; but it would seem that, although Mr. Garston came into the room, and recognized, as he must have done, the gentlemen who formed the party, yet not a word did he say to you or Miss Beecher on the subject of my being there: on the contrary, ascertaining, I presume, from the waiters in which direction I had walked out, he so contrived to bend your steps as to accomplish the meeting so unexpected by all concerned, save one."

"This is indeed strange," answered the peer, "and most indisputably shall be inquired into. But as regards Sir George Elms and his intended, I would willingly hear some further particulars respecting the engagement."

Thus conjured, Lord Dropmore did not for an instant hesitate to declare that, although he had for a long time been fully acquainted with the various rumours about town, connecting his name with that of his friend's intended, yet, in order to further the baronet's wishes, he had carefully refrained from either denying or acknowledging the report, which, indeed, was a very trivial exertion on his part, when, by so doing, the interests of his old acquaintance could be furthered.

On being pressed by his father, the young nobleman acknowledged the name, and expatiated on the supposed wealth, of the lady,—for to him the money being in her own power yet remained a secret. In short, ere the conference ended, the marquis felt convinced that Sir George Elms was about to be united to an affluent, accomplished, and beautiful being, having but one drawback—but that one insurmountable in his eyes—namely, want of family. The conduct of his son appeared in far different colours than he had anticipated would have transpired; he now looked on him as one who had been unjustly stigmatized as swayed by base and mercenary motives, whereas his conduct had not only been exemplary, but highly praiseworthy throughout; and, anxious to make the *amende honourable* for having even mentally doubted his son's rectitude of principle, he resolved in some way to countenance the business by becoming acquainted with the bride elect, and inviting her father and the baronet to dinner, when he would be better able to judge of the desirability of fostering their acquaintance.

It has already been shown that Lord Blanchard entertained no very great partiality in favour of Sir George; and, indeed, so far from it, that in his own mind he connected the influence which the baronet possessed over his son, with the various indiscretions and expences into which that son had been drawn; yet, how very far was he from knowing even a tenth part of the true state of the case!

After talking the matter over, it was arranged that Dropmore should intimate to his friend the desire of the marquis to become acquainted with Mr. Vernon and his daughter, which preliminary effected, Lord Blanchard would follow up the introduction by an invitation to his house; for, although the peer might possibly have preferred seeing his son reduced nearly to beggary, rather than wedded to so plebian a stock, yet he had not the slightest objection to Sir George Elms marrying whom he pleased; and the information that the lady possessed wealth, youth, and beauty, did not diminish his interest in her behalf.

Thus far, and for the time being, all prospered as Lord Dropmore could desire; but little did he at the time calculate on the various meshes which his duplicity was fast weaving

around him. In the first place, he had the previous evening openly led his acquaintances to believe that Sir George Elms, and not himself, was the destined possessor of the lady; and now he had just avowed to his father that such was in fact the case, thereby effectually lulling all suspicion of his own contemplated marriage. An introduction to his family now appeared inevitable, and how to curb the impetuosity of the merchant when once in Lord Blanchard's presence, required no little ingenuity in contriving; and since no one possessed the power of controlling his actions in the same degree as did Sir George Elms, to that worthy item of the baronetage were his steps accordingly turned.

When Lord Dropmore sprung from his horse in Green street, Sir George was reclining on his sofa, in all the enjoyment of the luxury of silk dressing gown and slippers, while, with his eyes half closed and his breakfast half eaten, he appeared to be wrapped up in mental cogitation on some abstruse and difficult point.

"Ah, Dropmore," he exclaimed, roused by the noise of his friend's approach, "glad to see you, never more welcome. I've been all the morning, and indeed the best part of the night, racking my brains in your behalf. But, tell me, what news from Grosvenor Square?"

"Good and bad, both; and through your aid, Elms, must I be extricated from the dilemma in which I find myself, otherwise escape is impracticable. My father sent for me two or three hours since—upbraided me about a supposed marriage which he said was reported as likely to take place between myself and some beautiful and affluent unknown; and, after having descanted on the theme till the subject was as worn out as *my* patience, he ended by saying he was confident of the falseness of the story, and entirely held me blameless of any participation in the affair. So far, so well; but it did not end there, for from rank and heiresses, off he flew to the rencontre of last evening: then, indeed, I found no little difficulty in parrying his thrusts, until at last, when driven completely into a corner, the old gentleman, in an imperative way, demanded *who* the lady was.

"Well, well," asked Sir George, impatiently, "what reply did you make?"

"Why, I announced her as *your* intended bride."

"*Mine*? Bless me, Dropmore, surely you did not tell the marquis that Miss Vernon was to be *my* wife? What on earth possessed you to invent such a tale as that?"

"Nor is that all," exclaimed the other, interrupting him—"not only did I declare that such was the case, but I likewise

bear a message requesting you to bring about an introduction with your relation that is to be, and his daughter, preparatory to a closer acquaintance with my aristocratic sire."

"What on earth can I do in the matter?" exclaimed the baronet, in tones expressive of dismay: "an uncomfortable predicament you have placed me in indeed, Dropmore—what to do I know not." But it so happened that the distressed mortal in the silk dressing gown and slippers, knew perfectly well what to do; and, moreover, was quickly resolved to take advantage of such knowledge to the utmost; yet was he not tempted to pourtray his satisfaction by any outward and visible sign.

"This is, indeed, a bad business," he continued; "but what can be done?"

"Simply this," replied the other, "the introduction will take place—you must allow yourself to be looked upon as the embryo Benedict; and to your all-powerful influence with the merchant, I must leave the difficult task of persuading both father and daughter of the urgent necessity for a brief concealment of my engagement."

"As for the father," answered Sir George, "I doubt not in the least being able for a time to compel him to conform to our plans; but, with regard to the lady, there indeed I acknowledge some difficulties may be anticipated. But why not speak to her yourself, Dropmore?"

"Not for worlds, Elms—I have made fool enough of myself already with her; and I am confident of still further exposure, if I venture on another interview like that of last evening. No, no; speak to her on this subject, I will not—but I can write; and if you will condescend to act as bearer of the letter, I will request her in all things to be guided by your advice, as the only means whereby our ultimate happiness can be effected. Indeed," he added, "were it not for these accursed acres, which are yet in my father's gift, and which by my marriage with Mary, must to a certainty pass away for ever, I would make her mine, past all redemption, ere four-and-twenty hours pass over my head."

"The spark has blown into a blaze somewhat too soon," thought the baronet, eyeing his victim as if in doubt whether his lordship might not be attempting a part as well as himself; but no, he seemed sincere in what he stated; and, had his determination been as boldly asserted a few hours back, he could not have found a more willing and zealous friend to aid his enterprize, than the now cogitating baronet before him. The reason may be safely surmised; for at the period of Sir George's anxiety to further the marriage between Miss Vernon and his friend, he was wholly unconscious of the pecuniary circum-

stances which the lady's father so injudiciously betrayed, but which, when known, materially altered his views.

To place himself in a position to claim the wealth was immediately the vision which floated before him; and, as good fortune had it, already was he proclaimed as the intended husband of the lady, and that too in the very presence of her father: yet the baronet was not so poor an observer of human nature, as not, long since, to have discovered that Mary Vernon really entertained towards Lord Dropmore an ardent and sincere attachment; and it was equally plain that the feeling was reciprocated by the latter; and that too, chiefly through the baronet's own exertions and untiring agency.

To shake the confidence of a young and artless girl, when she has voluntarily surrendered her first and deepest affection, and bestowed it on an object in her opinion superior to all the universe, is a task somewhat difficult to accomplish: but ever ready in expedients, and undaunted at the prospect of defeat, Sir George resolved immediately to attempt undermining that structure, which, for so long a time, he had been labouring to erect.

By what means his point was to be effected he little cared, so that he succeeded; and now gladly would he have undone all that, for months past, he had so ardently taxed himself to accomplish; and happy would he have felt, had the intimacy between Lord Dropmore and his cousin never been interrupted; but on that matter it was useless to repine. And, acting on the principle of deeming retrospection folly, when to look back is only to regret, he determined to apply with redoubled energy to his labour, and confidently work forward for triumphant success.

"Dropmore!" at length exclaimed his companion, "I fear this matter is not so easy of adjustment as you fancy; however, you well know I am always at your service; and in whatever mode or matter I can be of use, my assistance may confidently be relied on."

"Thanks, Elms, many, many thanks," replied the other, seizing his friend's proffered hand. "I'm fully aware you'll do all in your power; but let's talk the business over—what now do you propose?"

"Hum, there's the rub," responded Elms, "why, first of all, your marriage must be postponed—not put off altogether," he continued, seeing the astonishment of the other—"not finally off, you know—only adjourned."

"Why, for the last four months," replied the other, "you have constantly pestered me with the expediency of a speedy wedding, and that too, whether with or without my father's

wishes, and now you talk of postponing the union at the very moment when I have more than half made up my mind to its completion."

"Aye," responded Sir George, "but my dear Dropmore, observe how differently we are now situated to what we were at the period you speak of; *then*, no conversation on the subject had passed between your father and yourself; not a syllable had been said which could compromise you; and had you married the girl when I so strongly urged the measure, all might have eventually terminated well; you would not have broken any express commands of Lord Blanchard's, and, to say the most, the heinousness of your offence would have rested more on an opposition to one of your father's *supposed* prejudices, than on any decided act of filial disobedience on your part. But what is your position now?—very different indeed; you have chosen to make a statement to the effect that *I* am the person destined to marry the lady, and not yourself. Wholly and unequivocally you have declared that you possess no interest in the business, save as a friend anxious to promote the happiness of an intimate acquaintance: how then, let me ask, can you possibly on the instant, after having made such a declaration, act diametrically in opposition to your own assertions?" And, fixing his eyes steadily on Lord Dropmore's, the latter actually quailed beneath the glance of well-acted virtuous indignation which he encountered.

"In heaven's name, Elms, tell me what to do," replied the other. "Would that in the first instance, I had applied to my father, and then these numerous difficulties never would have happened."

"Such was ever my advice," answered Sir George, coolly, "and how pertinaciously you resisted my opinion, none know better than yourself. Is it not so?"

"True, too true indeed; and would to heaven that I had followed your instructions. But of what avail is it to talk in this strain?—let us look forward. And now, Elms, once again, I ask you what is to be done?"

"In the first place," replied the other, "you must inform the marquis that his wishes have been complied with, and that nothing will give Mr. Vernon and myself greater pleasure, than in making his lordship acquainted with the lady. The next step will be for me to prepare the alderman so as, if possible, to prevent any outbreak on his part. The succeeding one will be to convince the lady of the necessity of my inferior person being substituted for that of your lordship, in the character of her intended spouse; and the only visible way whereby to attain that end, is through the note which you stated your

intention of writing, requesting your fair correspondent to be ruled in all things by my advice, as best tending to bring about a final and happy adjustment. This done, I would strongly recommend you not to appear so distant towards your cousin, who surely, never having offended you, does not deserve such unkindness at your hands."

"Not offended me, indeed!" replied his lordship. "Has she not encouraged that adventuring scribbler, or whatever he may be? Does she not appear openly in the same box with him at the Opera? Does he not sometimes accompany her in her walks? Does she not sit in my father's study, while the mean spirited fellow reads aloud? Did she not take the bouquet from his hand that night in the lobby, with a smile of more than common meaning? Not offended me, truly! I know few who have done it more effectually—but, pshaw! let us speak like men, and I promise faithfully to do all you desire—aye, and more too, if such be your advice."

"'Tis well; and I doubt not but we shall prosper," replied the other; "but the day is waning, and I must be off to Gracechurch street ere dark, for there is little time to spare; and if I attempt to thread those labyrinths at night-fall, I shall infallibly lose myself for ever."

"I shall hear the result of course?" inquired Lord Dropmore, leaving the room.

"I'll take care of that," replied the other, laughing—adding, as the door closed—"and very disagreeable information it is likely to prove too. Ha! ha! ha!"

CHAPTER XIII.

"And darest thou, then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?"

SCOTT.

IMMEDIATELY after the interview between Lord Blanchard and his son, as detailed in the preceding volume, Frederick Garston was summoned to the presence of his patron, from whom, with no slight astonishment, he heard what had been advanced against him by Lord Dropmore. But a very brief

explanation, however, was requisite to undeceive the marquis as to any concealment or duplicity on the part of his secretary.

The reason of his intrusion into the room where Mr. Vernon and his friends were regaling, was readily explained, inasmuch as it was at the marquis's desire that Frederick Garston entered the house for the purpose of ordering coffee, which they intended taking on their return. By accident when descending the passage, he opened the wrong door, and thus found himself confronted with a party of gentlemen, not one of whom to his knowledge he had previously beheld, though as it eventually proved, the non-recognition was not mutual.

Nothing could have convinced Lord Dropmore that the meeting in the park, which in reality was purely accidental, had not its origin in an arrangement planned and executed by Garston, in the hope of lowering the former in the estimation of his cousin—forgetting at the same time, that his father's protégé was entirely ignorant of his entanglement with Mary Vernon, and was equally unaware that Lord Dropmore belonged to the party so jovially carousing.

Satisfactory as the explanation was to the marquis, it could not do otherwise than convince the young secretary how determined a foe he might ever expect to encounter in Lord Dropmore. And as it was evident that the slightest circumstance would be laid hold of if calculated in any degree to further the plans of his enemies, he determined in future so to regulate his conduct, that it would be found impossible to attach blame to his actions, and utterly impracticable to afford even an opportunity of misconstruing his words. Such was the determination entered on; but how difficult, nay, almost impossible, is it to carry such intentions into effect; for where there is a disposition to cavil and find fault with the deeds or words of those who are in any way placed within the controul of others, not the strictest attention and most undeviating rectitude of conduct, will always be found sufficient effectually to keep in check those who would trample on us.

Some such ruminations as these may have chanced to cross his mind, as Frederick Garston, seated in his own apartments, pressed his hand upon his brow, and lost in reverie, seemed unconscious of his momentary existence. The desk—the, to him, ever memorable desk—lay on the table before him; and by its side, reposed the long and beautifully black tress of hair which it may be remembered formed nearly the sole article bequeathed him by his father.

The room in which our hero then sat, was well and usefully furnished, with every convenience necessary for comfort, and in many instances approaching even to luxury; and the numerous

papers strewed about the apartment—and on which he had been employed by his patron's direction,—clearly pointed out the occupation of its tenant.

Raised from the obscure situation in which Lord Blanchard had found him, it might have been supposed that nothing could have interposed between Frederick Garston and content: yet was he far from happy. Gratitude to Lord Blanchard was the paramount feeling in his breast—still there were many and weighty reasons, why he should experience other than unalloyed sensations of enjoyment. In the first place: the doubt still hanging over his birth, was to his sensitive mind a continued source of uneasiness and dread, which, as he found himself compelled to mix more with the world, increased rather than diminished. Lord Dropmore's evident dislike was another cause of annoyance; and since his recent interview with the marquis, feeling convinced that his disgrace was the object aimed at, he half resolved to solicit permission to return to his former obscurity: but here again rose obstacles to controul the freedom of his actions. Would it be a proper return for all the kindness that had been heaped on him by the head of the family to desert his post after having voluntarily accepted the occupation, and *that* moreover, without being enabled to assign any good and sufficient reason beyond a mere supposition which, if stated, he had not the means of maintaining; and to substantiate which, he possessed no tangible proof? These were strong reasons why the thought of resignation should not be harboured for an instant—added to which, there was one attraction far more powerful that kept him where he was—a spell which he could not break—a charm which he possessed neither power nor inclination to combat, an attachment impossible to controul—and the object of that adoration was—Emily Beecher.

Plans of the future poor Frederick had never contemplated; and, delighted with the permission, offered to read some favourite author to the peer—when, as often was the case, Emily remained in the room—little did he then conjecture that the remembrance of the intoxicating pleasure of her society on those occasions could serve to embitter many an after hour.

Still and unmoved Frederick sat at the table, his head resting on his hand, when a slight touch on his shoulder roused him from his reverie, and having satisfied himself, by a prolonged gaze, that the object before him was a *bond fide* being of this world, Frederick Garston rose from his seat, and, apologizing for his absence of manner, offered Lord Dropmore a chair.

Surprised, as he was, at the suddenness of the visit—an honor, by the by, never previously conferred, Frederick Garston entirely forgot the long tress of dark hair which, at that moment,

lay upon his desk; not so unobservant was his visitor, for keeping his eyes fixed on the glossy fibres, his brow gradually darkened, and, if his visitation had originally been intended in kindness, every vestige of an amicable feeling rapidly passed from his countenance.

"I fear, Mr. Garston," he commenced, "I much fear my intrusion has been particularly ill-timed; and, I assure you, I as deeply regret as you yourself can deplore, the evil fortune which led me to disturb so pleasing a reverie as you must have enjoyed under the influence of such a treasure as, I perceive, you not only possess, but leave exposed for the contemplation of whoever may be honoured by visiting your apartment;" and, pointing to the lock of hair with a malicious sneer, his lordship sank into the chair placed for him.

The deep colour which instantly overspread Garston's features was, of course, readily attributed to a consciousness of the well-deserved sarcasm; nor was his endeavour to suppress his angry feelings otherwise construed than as a tacit avowal of the justness of the rebuke.

The command, however, which Frederick Garston struggled to maintain over his feelings was, in a few seconds, attained; and hastily returning the cause of so much angry feeling to its accustomed sanctuary, he closed the desk, and calmly inquired if his lordship had any commands wherewith to honor him.

"Nay, nay, Mr. Garston," replied his Lordship, in the same sarcastic tone, "far be it from me to presume to demand service from so accomplished a cavalier as you prove yourself; on the contrary, methinks it would be more fitting on my part to crave instruction in that science whereof you appear so efficient a master. May I take the liberty, being a near relation to one of the presumed parties concerned," he continued, with difficulty controlling his anger within bounds of common civility, "may I take the liberty of suggesting the expediency of being admitted as a confidant in this apparently prosperous and, doubtless, well assorted engagement?"

"There is not any engagement that I am conscious of, my lord," coolly replied Garston, "nor have I the most remote idea to whom your lordship alludes, in reference to me, as claiming the honor of relationship with yourself."

"Really, Mr. Garston," replied the nobleman, "your faculties are somewhat more obscured to-day than usually is the case; but come, come," he added, in a forced tone of banter, "there is nothing surely to be ashamed of, but, on the contrary, much of self-congratulation in having proved so extremely fortunate in such a suit."

"Again I must beg to remind your lordship," said Garston,

more seriously than before, "Again I beg you will bear in mind that I am wholly ignorant of whom you are pleased to speak; and, for a second time, I repeat that I know nothing of an engagement existing between any living person and myself, of the nature which your lordship has so pointedly hinted at."

"This is carrying your delicacy somewhat too far, sir, and, in my humble opinion, stretching the complaisance of your listeners in a degree beyond your right of playing on their credulity," retorted Lord Dropmore, rapidly losing temper, "and, to me in particular, who have marked your manœuvres throughout; I confess it displays anything rather than that which might have been expected from your presumption. But, so it ever is, those who would fly highest often want the spirit to spread their wings when the opportunity offers for the attempt, and among others I conclude I may class Lord Blanchard's secretary?"

There is a boundary beyond which no man's patience can be kept in subjection; and rapidly was Frederick Garston's choler approaching that point, where he knew how impossible it would be for him longer to curb his resentment. For the time, however, he checked any outward expression of rising anger, and determined not to leave it in his adversary's power to affix blame hereafter on himself, he resolved once more to attempt conviction by plain reasoning.

"I should be loth to imagine," he resumed, "that Lord Dropmore could seek the apartment of a person holding the dependent situation in which I am placed in his father's family, with the express purpose of offering unmerited and gratuitous insult to one so wholly incapable of resenting it; neither can I conceive that the accusation with which your lordship has taxed me, could have any origin save in an attempt at pleasantry, which, however misplaced and calculated to wound my feelings, I shall be satisfied at finding is the case, since, for the third time, I now declare that I have not the most distant conception as to who the person may be whom your lordship has thought proper to couple with my name."

"By heavens, this is too provoking," replied the other, "you carry on the joke well indeed, Mr. Garston; but there is a point which, when arrived at, makes hypocrisy disgusting."

"Surely, my lord," angrily interrupted Garston, "you do not mean to affix the stigma of hypocrisy to my conduct?"

"Nay, sir," replied the other, "is it not enough that I deliver my sentiments to you, without being called on to explain their meaning, as though you possessed not common understanding?"

"Certainly not, Lord Dropmore," was the answer, "and in justice to yourself as well as to me, you are bound, as a gentle-

man, to deny the intention of affixing any such unfounded stigma on my name."

"It would indeed be a pity, were anything to sully the brightness of so renowned a patronymic," sneeringly remarked the other, "but to carry on an argument with my father's secretary was not the object of my visit, nor indeed came I here for other than purposes favourable to yourself; but what I have witnessed since entering this apartment, bearing irrefragable proofs of the meanness and duplicity which must have produced such a consummation, has materially changed my intentions."

"Duplicity—meanness—I hurl back in the teeth of him who dare asperse me," exclaimed Garston, now thoroughly irritated, "and much as I am beholden to the Marquis of Blanchard for his undeviating kindness, and deeply as I confess the obligation under which I lie, nevertheless, nothing shall induce me tamely to submit to a repetition of the insults I have now received, and which accusations are totally devoid of any foundation."

"These heroics, Mr. Garston," replied the other, "I beg to observe, are extremely well acted; but on me wholly thrown away. To save all parties much trouble, and an unnecessary waste of words, allow me to inquire if the lock of hair you but a few seconds since secreted, was not the gift of a lady to whom nothing, save the grossest presumption, could have induced you to raise your thoughts?"

"To language such as you now utter, Lord Dropmore," replied the other, "I do not think it incumbent on me to reply. I have already informed you of my ignorance respecting who might be the object of your suspicions, and I shall therefore decline putting myself in the way of receiving further gratuitous and unmerited insults. My lord, I wish you good day," and seizing his hat, he was on the point of departing, when his guest checked his progress.

"You do not leave me thus, Mr. Garston," he exclaimed, "and since you seem so perversely determined not to understand my meaning, I will now put the question to you in plain and unambiguous terms. Have you not aspired to the favour of a lady, an inmate of this house, and was not the braid of hair which you appear so greatly to value, bestowed by the individual I allude to?"

In a moment the truth flashed upon Frederick's mind—Lord Dropmore was jealous of Emily Beecher—jealous of the favour in which his father's dependent secretary was held. Was it in human nature otherwise than to feel a throb of exultation at the discovery that he, the despised, the neglected Frederick Garston, had become the rival, the feared rival, of the gay and

gifted young nobleman before him? yet, an instant's consideration convinced him, that to allow such a supposition to go forth could never tally with the conduct of an honourable man; and however gladly Frederick Garston would have undergone any privation and trial in the distant hope of hereafter calling that beautiful creature his own, his innate gentlemanly feelings at once pointed out the gross indelicacy of sanctioning, by word or silence, what must, to her, prove so injurious a report.

The inquiry had hardly left the lips of Lord Dropmore, ere the insinuation was promptly and energetically denied by the other, and that in such strong terms that, although the enraged accuser did not give entire credence to the contradiction; yet the assertion was uttered in so bold, so manly a tone, that nothing further remained to be done at the time than seemingly to acquiesce in the explanation.

"I know not," exclaimed Garston, "whether I am more surprised at the extraordinary suspicion which your lordship has just uttered, or hurt at the invectives you have thought proper to heap on me prior to ascertaining whether your surmises were correct or not. As it would be dishonourable and base to allow a lady's name to remain for one moment in a position which is, in the present instance, truly distressing, I voluntarily declare that the lock of hair which chance alone brought under your notice, belonged to a lady whom I have good reason to suppose has, long since, been numbered with the dead. I make this statement, my lord," he added, proudly, "not because I concede your right to demand it, but solely from disinclination to furnish any grounds whatever for supposing me capable of insinuating that any understanding whatever exists between the lady to whom you allude and myself, beyond what courtesy has ever granted to a person who has the honour of dwelling under one roof, and of frequently meeting at the same table. Thus far have I replied to your unjust and intemperate accusations; and now, my lord, though for the lady's sake, I pledge my word to the accuracy of what I have just spoken, I beg it may be clearly understood that I deny any right of yours to question my actions or impugn my motives. To Lord Blanchard I am ever ready to explain whatever may be demanded of me; but to all interrogatories emanating from your lordship, I, from this moment, decline reply, as I consider, and ever shall so imagine, that neither my deeds, wishes, or motives are amenable to your lordship's scrutiny." And civilly bowing to his self-invited guest, Frederick Garston passed from the room, leaving Lord Dropmore not a little ashamed of his own conduct, and conscious of having enacted the part of a spoilt child; yet, for that very reason, more bitterly confirmed in his unprincipled determina-

tion of obtaining the removal of the obnoxious secretary from his father's house—and for no other reason than because he thought proper to be jealous of his supposed attention to a woman whose society he had himself fled from, and whose presence he now almost studied to avoid.

On quitting the apartment, Frederick Garston's first impulse was to seek an interview with the Marquis, and at once declare his resolution of returning to his former obscurity, but a very brief reflection was sufficient to point out the objection to such a course; for, how would it be possible for him to put Lord Blanchard in complete possession of the circumstances of the case, without greatly animadverting on the unfavourable conduct of his son? And, most assuredly it was not for him, who had derived such substantial benefits at the hands of his patron, to prove the very person to inflict upon him so heavy a blow? Besides which, his conscience in no slight degree warned him that, although what he had stated to Lord Dropmore was in itself substantially correct, yet he could not conceal from himself how truly his feelings had been guessed, and the real state of his affections fathomed. To Dr. Glitzom he could not turn for advice, for, although possessed of a sufficient share of common sense, and a more than usual proportion of the kindness of human nature, the benevolent doctor was about the last man calculated to form an opinion on so delicate a point, and equally removed from the chance of understanding the question even were it explained.

Rejecting the idea of seeking counsel from his first and truest friend, to whom could he look for aid? Of all the glittering throngs who were to be found at the splendid mansion of the Marquis, was there one who ever treated him but as a favoured menial? Was there one who did not view him as an interloper, forced from his own proper sphere to mingle in a world of which he formed no part? Yes, one there was, and from whom, ever since the night of the Opera already recorded, Frederick Garston had experienced uniform kindness—not that hollow affectation of patronage, which offends more than conciliates, but that openness of manner and frank communion which one man of good and proper feeling is ever inclined to bestow on another, whom, from his talents and good conduct, he may be induced to honor with his acquaintance—and this solitary individual was the young Lord Valoire, who had studiously cultivated Frederick Garston's acquaintance, and towards whom the latter naturally felt the strongest bias.

Pondering on the propriety of seeking assistance at the hands of Lord Valoire, Frederick Garston quitted the house; and so occupied was he with his own painful associations that, until

hearing his name mentioned, he knew not that he stood in the presence of the object of Lord Dropmore's jealousy and his own secret devotion, Emily Beecher.

"I declare, Mr. Garston," commenced the lively girl, laughing, "you look as dejected at this moment as though you were quitting some haunted castle, after a night's sojourn with a refractory ghost, rather than leaving a modern mansion in one of the most civilized cities in the world; besides which you were so abstracted, that had I not spoken, I verily believe you would have walked over me, and that, moreover, without being at all conscious of your misdemeanor."

"A thousand pardons, Miss Beecher," exclaimed Garston, recovering from his surprise, "for my rude and ungracious conduct; but ungallant as it must appear, the true reason of my fault exists in my ignorance of your presence. In fact, I was just going—" and hesitating in his speech, his fair examiner continued—

"Going where, Mr. Garston? Upon my word I shall begin to think the old mansion in Grosvenor Square is, in some measure, capable of inflicting sadness or, at least, dismal looks on its occupants. There is my dear uncle, for instance; why! all this afternoon he has been restless and uneasy, as though something weighed on his mind. Then, again, it is but an hour or two, since I met my cousin Dropmore; he too appeared annoyed, and scarcely deigned to notice me, although," she continued in a lower tone, as if involuntarily giving utterance to her thoughts, "although, of late, I have not participated much in the honor of his society," and a proud smile of offended dignity hovered round her lips at the remembrance of what her cousin's devotion towards her *had* been formerly.

"And Miss Beecher would add so humble an individual as myself to the noble persons enumerated to fill up the list of dolorous countenances?" gaily inquired Frederick; "such being the case, I readily acknowledge the offence laid to my charge."

"Nay, Mr. Garston," replied Emily, in a more serious tone, "I am now convinced, more from your manner than your words, that something *has* occurred to disturb the harmony of our family; and, as I do not consider myself a child, I expect you will do me the justice of making me a participator in this momentous affair. Come, Mr. Garston," she added, playfully, "I am only going to take a few turns in the square, whither, unless compelled to wander on more urgent business, I demand your presence there to unfold the secret which has the power to cast so dismal a spell on so many persons, in so short a time;" and applying the key to the garden gate, Emily entered

the square, followed by Frederick Garston, astonished at the happiness thus afforded him, yet wholly unconscious by what means to evade the questions to which it was evidently the intention of the lady to subject him.

Long and deeply have we pondered over the subject, whether it would be justifiable to lay bare the private conversation that occurred on that momentous occasion; and having interrogated many who, to our certain knowledge, have been similarly engaged, the reply has invariably been in the negative. For ourselves, though not boasting of having largely partaken of such felicity, yet we can trace through the long vista of years, some few bright sunny spots in our pilgrimage when moments thus occupied cast a *couleur de rose* round every object in existence; and when in the happiness of having been selected by a young and beautiful woman, as her companion in a solitary ramble—and rambles *can* be solitary even in Grosvenor Square—we have stepped upon the earth more lightly—have gazed on all around with a determination to be pleased, and, feeling happy in ourselves, have passed along with that joyousness of heart which love and youth alone can bestow, and which, ere a few, a very few, winters have passed over, must for ever lose the freshness and fragrance of that period never, never, to return.

That chilly epoch, however, had not then shed its icy coldness around the hearts of Emily Beecher and Frederick Garston; yet, although not a syllable was uttered by either which might not have been detailed at every tea party within the United Kingdom, nevertheless their conversation must have been extremely agreeable to each other, as Sir George Elms affirmed that they walked in the square three whole hours, as he himself took the trouble of ascertaining, by remaining for that period seated on his horse outside the railings.

THE SISTER'S CHOICE.

A TALE FOR OLD AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

BY C. A. M. W.



“ Bay leaves betweene—and Primrose greene,
Embellish the sweete Violet.”

I WAS in my teens when taken, for the first time, to witness a theatrical representation, and this treat was afforded through the influence and persuasion of a certain twentieth cousin, generally known as “kind Con,” or “old Con, or, more properly and respectfully speaking, as Mrs. Constantia Ripley. She was a short, rotund, merry-hearted creature, with a pocket full of bon-bons, and a head full of funny sayings and odd stories, which she delighted to tell to young folks; and, as her droll tales always had something in them improving and pleasant, either openly conveyed or covertly demonstrated, every one was glad to listen. It was a real boon to have cousin Con. at Christmas tide; what rejoicings there were when we heard she was coming! and when she did come, and a private box was by her secured at Drury Lane for our special use and benefit, in order to see the performance of a grand Christmas Pantomime, then, the enthusiasm and gratitude we felt towards our benefactress reached its climax.

There were other children of our party; but either they had been to fairy-land before, or their dispositions were less excitable than mine, for the regret I felt when the brilliant display was over, and the dark curtain fell, caused me to weep bitterly, and my sole desire was to be left in that comfortable box to live and die there. With clasped hands, beseechingly, I cried, “Oh, dear cousin Con, if I could but come here every night for all my life long, I should be the happiest creature on earth.”

“You make me think of another little cousin, my dear,” answered Mrs. Ripley, “when, last Christmas, he was so elated at the sight of the huge plumb pudding, that, standing up and stretching forth his hand majestically, as he was taught

to do when repeating 'My name is Norval,' he solemnly exclaimed, 'Con—when I am a man—I will dine off plumb pudding every day!' To-morrow morning, my dear, you and I must have a talk together, and then, perhaps, I can tell you somewhat concerning *my* thoughts and doings when I was at your age, which may cause you to smile as well as set you a thinking. So dry your eyes, and let us all go home and to bed as fast as we can."

When to-morrow morning came, the promise was not forgotten on either side, and cousin Ripley being quite ready to redeem it, gave the following narrative in substance, thus:—

"I had two elder sisters, named Anna and Emily, and we were all three in our early teens, when our father purchased a small estate in the country; we were joyous, giddy things, although brought up in the midst of a large, crowded, and dingy city, where we saw no flowers, save the stunted ones which were reared in our pretty green basket-stands, and where we heard no singing birds, save the canaries and bullfinches imprisoned in their ornamented cages. Circumstances had hitherto prevented our parents from indulging either themselves or us, with rural pleasures; and the annual sea-side sojourn, although very delightful and renovating, yet left our imaginations free to picture fields and trees, running waters and flower gardens, gently sloping hills, embowered cottages, and all the innumerable charms of a richly-wooded inland county. Our future home was called 'The Woodlands,' and bright were the anticipations with which we looked forward to the approaching summer, when we were to remove thither; nor were they doomed to disappointment, as sanguine hopes too often are, for the picturesque scenery surrounding our new home, and the thousand novelties which greeted us at every turn, made us three girls agree in thinking that no pictures in the annuals, no books of nature, had ever portrayed any scenes half so lovely as the realities which lay before our eyes. We had decided on becoming great gardeners, wonderful botanists, and cultivators of the soil, and we were each to have a portion of ground for our '*very own*;' and, moreover, our kind father permitted us to make choice for ourselves, beginning with Anna, the eldest of the trio, after we had sufficiently explored and studied the localities of the adjacent grounds, to enable us to form a prudent judgment. Ah! how happy were those explorings and difficulties of decision! how hard to choose amongst such overflowing riches and profusion of nature's gifts!"

"Anna at length announced that her choice was made; a small but beautiful rosery, surrounded by invisible rails, had completely won her heart, and she fixed upon that as her portion

of the inheritance. 'I love roses so dearly,' cried Anna, 'I never imagined anything half so lovely as this rosery! Oh, how I shall tend it by day, and dream of it by night! I never can tire of roses; nor wish for other flowers when I possess them.'

"These rhapsodies would be inexcusable, my dear Anna,' said our good mother, 'were due allowances not made for the novelty as well as undoubted beauty of your rosery.'

"But do you not think, in the long run, that a little variety would be better? a few other flowers to tend? Suppose you choose the plot of ground bounded by the strawberry beds, there are brilliant rainbow colours there, with some rose bushes intermixed; to say nothing of that picturesque old apple-tree, with its spreading branches.'

"Ah, mama,' answered Anna, 'what is all this in comparison to the rosery? No, no; I am *sure* its sameness never can weary me. I wish for nothing more.'

"Well, my dear, be it so,' said our mother, 'I advise you to endeavour to improve your stock, and carefully to study the history of the plants.'

"I had already fixed on my lot; this was a strip of kitchen-garden, bounded on one side by a noble hedge of peas, and encircled by beans on the other; there was an asparagus bed, a cucumber frame, gooseberry and currant bushes, cabbages, brocoli, celery,—in short, all and every vegetable was to be raised here by turns. I had a great ambition to be called a 'sensible girl,' a 'thrifty manager,' superior to feminine weakness, preferring the useful to the ornamental. Besides, I was a little bit of a gourmand myself in the vegetable line, and to supply the table with the earliest and best, would be so gratifying in all respects. Not that I despised flowers, but I could not attend to both; and would not the fragrance of the flowering beans and the blossom of the peas be doubly interesting on account of their promise?"

As to my second sister, Emily, she was fairly puzzled; and, after much wandering about in various directions, and changing her mind daily, she had very nearly decided on taking the spot of ground named by our dear mother, where the luxuriant strawberry beds flourished and the old apple-tree watched over all.

"The sloping banks down to the rapid streamlet's edge are favourable for the growth and ripening of your favourite fruit Emily," suggested our mother, "and I have no doubt they are magnificent strawberries."

"By the bye, mama, I wonder where that sparkling streamlet wanders to," exclaimed Emily, "I think I will explore it ere I

decide; I have a strange presentiment that I shall find something quite as unique and charming as Anna's rosery."

A few hours after this conversation, Emily came bounding to where Anna was standing, in the midst of her newly acquired property, complacently regarding it, and breathless with running, she triumphantly cried "there is but *one violet cave* as well as *one rosery* in the Woodlands! Come with me, Anna—come with me—I have fixed on my portion now and for ever! Ah, there is little Con. amongst her cabbages; come with us, Con! come away, and I will lead you both to the fairy queen's own private violet garden! no one ever loved violets so well as I do, better than you love roses, Anna; am I not lucky? haste, and follow me!"

We followed Emily in her rapid flight by the side of the meandering burn, through a thick copse and tangled underwood, which scratched and tore us wofully; but, in our excitement, we did not heed this; we crossed some wooden planks thrown across the rivulet, and came to a succession of rocky projections, past which the water glided; there was a narrow pathway by its side—so narrow that we could only advance one by one, and where the rocks nearly met overhead, leaving a narrow chink for daylight to peep through; they were hollowed out beneath, forming a kind of spacious cave, through which the stream softly murmured. The whole flooring was carpeted with emerald moss, and beds of violets laved and washed by the tiny wavelets, whose fragrance was absolutely overpowering. What with the green verdure, the delicious scent, and the modest little darlings peeping forth all around us, it was indeed an enchanted scene—we could not step without crushing them—and we literally had beds of violets to repose upon!

We crowned Emily on the spot, Queen of the Violet Cave, and congratulated her on the fortunate discovery.

"I shall often come and see you, Emily," said Anna, "in your beautiful retirement. How pleasant during the burning days of summer it will be to sit and read here!"

"And I," said Emily, "mean to visit you, dear Anna, when the rosy summer morn is breaking—when the early dews glisten on the bosoms of your blushing beauties."

"And won't you both come and see little Con. in her cabbage garden," quoth I, "and help her to cut the cabbages for dinner, and to gather the gooseberries and currants?"

"Yes, dear, that we will," exclaimed both my sisters together, good humouredly, "and we will help you, dear Con., to gather the snails and the slugs that *will* haunt the best tended cabbage beds."

"I wonder where mama means to have *her* garden," said Anna: "she decides last of all, for she insisted on our choosing first."

"I *think* mama will take the strawberry-beds," quoth I, "and those brilliant varied flower-beds beside the old apple tree. Mama will have variety there, and I have often heard her say she likes that; and certainly it is the prettiest spot in the woodlands, excepting the rosery and the violet cave."

"And your cabbage garden, Con, darling," said both together, laughingly.

When next summer came round, we all exclaimed with better reason still, "What a rich variety mama has! she supplies us with such exquisite bouquets, and such delicious strawberries and apples." We delighted to wander in that variegated flower-garden, and Anna hinted that she thought a *few* other flowers interspersed amongst her roses, would have a good effect; while Emily requested a *few* roots of lilies of the valley, to vary the sameness of her violet cave. As to me, I borrowed and begged from them all, roses, violets, lilies, and hyacinth bells; and I tried in vain to coax a humble wall-flower, and a gaudy tulip, to fraternise with my vegetables; but they afforded such a feast to the snails and caterpillars of the locality, that skeletons only were left, and I was quizzed unmercifully by everybody. Nor did Anna and Emily escape—as our parents would not permit any alteration to be made in the rosery or violet cave. "For," said our mother, "they are each perfect in their original condition: as you found them, so they must be left. But next summer, my dear girls, I will gladly give up the superintendence of *my* garden to you, and you shall all tend it together for me. Only do not forget the easy lesson thus pleasingly learnt: remember that although roses are peerless and beautiful, we should be weary in time of never seeing anything but roses—*all roses*; or violets—*all violets*; or cabbages—*all cabbages*;—elegance may be combined with usefulness, and variety with prudence and simplicity; for extremes are ever best to be avoided."

"And so my dear cousin," said Mrs. Con Ripley, as she concluded, "I have never forgotten this sweet lesson of *my* early happy days; and do you think *you* can apply the moral of it to your own case—'Moderation in all things?'"

R O M E I N ' 4 9 .

BY C. E. NUGENT.

Beneath a southern sky fair Nature's face
 Will greenly bloom, with every vernal grace,
 The early sun bids lingering tempests cease,
 And fragrant breezes softly whisper peace.
 Summer, with all her rainbow-tinted train,
 Dancing o'er hill and vale, returns again.
 But all in vain the glorious sun for thee
 Shines o'er thy beauteous fields, fair Italy!
 Music no more is heard in hall or bower,
 At early morn or noon-tide's sultry hour;
 No minstrel now in song a chaplet weaves,
 As zephyrs murmur 'mong the glistening leaves,
 When Sol's last rays the West bespangling o'er,
 Bids mirth, light-hearted, claim the hour once more.
 Still, chief of all, does memory turn to thee,
 Home of the past, the boast of Italy.
 Again the seven-hilled city's pride laid low;
 No Goth or Vandal now the ruthless foe,
 But brethren, christian men, are leagued to slay,
 Roll back the past as if 'twere yesterday:
 Alas for Rome! Cannot history tell
 With solemn warning, as a passing bell,
 How vain intestine strife! how vain to be
 Lured by the empty show of Liberty!
 As o'er a deep, dark stream bright flowers will blow,
 Untelling all the cataract below.
 Has gilded Freedom now a boon in store?
 Does arch triumphal wait the conqueror?
 What are those marks of recent shell and ball,
 Deep-denting o'er the Roman Capitol?
 A monument, in vain, of empire gone,
 'Truth-telling relic of the Cæsars' throne.
 The Colosseum, too, must claim a tear,
 As if dark ancient days were present there.
 'Tis consecrated now, a ruined fane,
 Undreaming barbarous times would come again,
 When slaves in the arena strove to win
 Another hour of life by conquering.

Can Freedom boast a worthier service now?
Is not the "March of Intellect" bowed low?
Go, view that column to an emperor's praise,
His statue crowned it in the olden days;
But now, oh bitter mockery! is reared
St. Paul, apostle of the Gospel word:
He meekly points to realms beyond the sky;
But man still strives with man for sovereignty.
Then, O my country! do thou, thankful, bless
The Lord of Life, the spring of happiness,
From which the living waters sparkling rise,
Refresh anew all human destinies,
Thankful that o'er our land they peaceful flow,
A shining light, amid a world of woe,—
That, undeserved, our homes can echo still
All gratitude to God, to man good-will.

THE SALUTARY LESSON.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

CHAPTER I.

"My dear Mildred, do pray tell me candidly whether you have ever heard any reports prejudicial to the character of my pretty little protégée, Laura Harding? If you have not, my love, I must say that your coldness and superciliousness to her are most unpardonable."

"Why, aunt, I certainly have not heard anything decidedly against her; but still I think she labours under extremely disadvantageous appearances,—living, as she does, in so unfashionable a locality, and with such a vulgar mother, too, at the same time; making such an ostentatious display of dress and jewellery as ought only to be sanctioned by undoubted wealth and rank. For my part, I cannot reconcile such inconsiderateness with strict integrity, however charitably I may be disposed."

"So, then, your mortifying and humiliating manner to her to-night, and, indeed, constantly of late, had no other foundation than the mere conjectures which spring, I earnestly hope, only

from thoughtlessness, and not malignity. Nothing, believe me, is more dangerously fallacious than that inconsiderate judging from appearances, which too many of us indulge, without, perhaps, designedly intending to injure. They may deceive the most wise, the most wary, condemn the most virtuous; even you, or I, may some time or other be the innocent victims of them. I have known Laura from childhood; I have carefully studied her artless and ingenuous disposition; and I can conscientiously declare that every hour has increased my love and admiration of it, and forced me secretly to wish that your own more resembled it, in gentle and inoffensive meekness."

"What an idea, aunt! I am sure I consider such a wish no compliment, for I should detest resembling, in the slightest degree, so insipid a being as Laura, I assure you."

"Alas! there is no chance of your so doing: you will never be half so amiable. But, however, to refute the frivolous charges, or rather surmises, you bring against the sweet girl, I admit that her jewellery is most elegant and costly; but then it was her mother's."

"Yes, aunt, I know it was; but how did it become hers? that is the mystery I am anxious to solve. I never will believe such an uneducated, common-place woman as Mrs. Harding ever obtained those splendid diamonds honestly,—that she ever was the *wife* of a man of birth and family."

"Hush, Mildred, hush! how would you like the possession of the very diamonds you are now wearing to be so suspiciously challenged? Mind you are never punished with similar retribution for your want of faith in the virtue of another."

"But, even supposing she were not a wife, shall we presumptuously arrogate to ourselves the awful privilege of visiting the sins of the parent upon the child? It is sufficient for him who never errs in his divine judgment to threaten so to do, and yet only to the offspring of those who still continue in a state of open reprobation, of unrepenting defiance and contumely of his laws; for his promises are most affluent, most hopeful, for the sons and daughters of contrite parents, as you must remember, even extending to thousands, for them that love him."

"However, I firmly believe she was a wife, a virtuous, honourable wife. She must have been superlatively beautiful; and very young men, whether of high birth or not, are frequently tempted to commit what we may esteem acts of desperate folly and imprudence to attain the possession of those charms which, perhaps, an innate modesty saves from yielding on easier, or rather, more worldly terms."

"In extreme youth, love is passion, desire; it has none of the reverence for talent, the congruity of rank, imperativeness of

mutual station, which distinguish a more matured and reflective attachment. At that age of impetuosity and self-will, the idea never arises in the mind that in a few years something will be necessary to happiness besides a faultless complexion, a fine form, and matchless features. Hence, one so often sees such ill-assorted pairs as, in all probability, Mr. and Mrs. Harding were.

"I dwell the more on this point, because I wish to destroy your injurious impressions, Mildred, to save you from censure; for you do not appear to be aware how it militates against the purity of your own mind, in the opinion of others, thus to analyze and investigate so critically, so unkindly, the supposed past misconduct of one of your own sex. Woman to woman should at least be charitable. When the detected adulteress stood before Jesus, bowed in the agony of conscious guilt, and trembling with terror for the sentence he might pronounce, and which she knew was her due, however severe—did he condemn her? No! 'Go, and sin no more,' was the mild oblation of the immaculate Saviour. Let us imitate him, my dear niece, even when assured of criminality; or, at least, religiously avoid condemning those whom we only suspect.

"Do you not fear, too, lest the world, ever malignant against youth and beauty, may not impute your behaviour towards Laura as proceeding from envy and jealousy? For, handsome as you undoubtedly are, Mildred, there is a softness of expression in her countenance which may be thought still more fascinating."

"*I* envious! *I* jealous! I should blush for myself, if I had, for an instant harboured a sentiment so disparaging to my own attractions. I have only to consult my glass, to be perfectly convinced I need fear no rivalry in that quarter."

To look at her as she then spoke, with her fine head elevated with conscious pride and superiority, her cheek flushed, and her eye sparkling with stifled indignation, she certainly did seem as if she had nothing to dread on that score. Yet, the too apparent knowledge of that transcendent loveliness in a measure weakened the effects of those charms, otherwise invincible. Her style of beauty wanted that softening shade of character, that inobtrusive bashfulness, which conquers without effort, and is, indeed ignorant of its victory. Like a gorgeous but still modern painting, its colours were too glaring, too palpable; they required the mellowing of affliction, to attemper them to the aching gaze of the meditative spectator.

"No one can deny," resumed her aunt, "that you are as handsome as your glass and your vanity assure you you are; but, Mildred, what, after all, are mere personal attractions,

without the lovelier graces of the mind? What is the worth of the rose bereaved of its perfume? or, what is the worth of youth, devoid of the heavenlier fragrance, which breathes in the generous impulse, the quick sympathy, the warm aspirations, which tell the sanguine, spontaneous heart.

"When I see you at so early an age so impassive to the upspringing emotion, the confiding and reciprocal tenderness, which is so delightful between young girls, I really sicken at the idea of the state of callousness to which your feelings must ultimately arrive, unless some signal visitation overtake you, to melt your heart, and awake your senses to a more loveable, amiable, and Christian-like mode of thinking. And rely on it, you will never have a better opportunity than the present, to commence the work of reformation, by atoning in every way to Laura for your past unjustifiable conduct, by every act of kindness in your power."

"Indeed, aunt, I shall make no concessions of the sort, until I am quite convinced of the truth. I do not want her friendship, nor that of any such people. In fact, to be quite candid, I have frequently heard your own conduct strongly animadverted upon, for the pointed manner in which you distinguish in your parties those it is a marvel to all your friends you ever think of inviting. Instead of paying that courteous deference to rank which is generally supposed to be due to it, you seem on those occasions to be absorbed in the most flattering attentions to the humblest, the most unknown individuals present; and by so doing, you excite as much surprise as jealousy, aunt."

"It is perfectly immaterial to me what the illiberal may choose to say respecting my conduct on those occasions, or on any others in which I may take so conspicuous a part as to attract the observation of the censorious and ill-judging. My sole object through life has been, and is, to promote happiness, to exalt the lowly; and, in fact, as far as in me lies, to render those innocent reunions as much like the assemblies above as possible, where the loftiest places, the most striking honours, are described as the rewards of worth and virtue.

"Besides, whom do I offend by my modest patronage? Not the really high-minded, not the truly meritorious; but they who, presuming on the fortuitous circumstance of birth, neglect the cultivation of those estimable qualities, which do ennoble the possessor, or are deficient in them. But be assured that a *bad* man can never be considered worthy of admiration, in the eyes of the discerning, from an unblemished ancestry; nor a *good* one of neglect, from an unblazoned pedigree. These are my sentiments, Mildred, and on them I ever intend scrupulously to regulate my actions."

"You may do as you please, aunt, but I like to know with whom I associate; I do not wish to degrade myself, for perhaps I cannot afford to display such utopian sentiments of generosity."

"Perhaps you cannot, indeed. Many a satirical word is uttered with a bitter scorn, which afterwards recoils with a mordant anguish on the thoughtless jester."

"I do not apprehend so pungent a rebound of my poor wit. However, imagining that I can take care of myself, and as for my poor mother——"

"Your mother! ah, there it is. For eighteen years I knew a lady, beautiful, elegant, accomplished, and exemplary, who was received into the highest, the most select society; who lived the pride and delight of a large circle of admiring and devoted friends; who was held up by mothers to their young and artless daughters, as a pattern of virtue and excellence for their imitation, and by fathers to their youthful sons, as a model of the wife whom they ought to select, to ensure their felicity; who died in the odour of sanctity, wept and lamented by all, leaving one child, as fair, as idolized, as extravagantly adorned as Laura Harding: and yet——"

"Yet what, aunt? Oh, how tedious you are! do, pray, pray, speak with less deliberation, in pity to my hurrying thoughts! And yet—what?"

"Curb your impatience, Mildred; you will learn soon enough—too soon."

"Why, how *can* it concern it me? Did I not know the contrary, I should almost fancy that you were the mysterious lady in question. Why do you pause so prophetically, aunt? And yet—what?"

"She was *never* married; her whole life was a tissue of deception."

"Good heavens! how dreadful! Who—who could it be?"

"Your own mother."

"My mother! Mercy! but, it cannot be true!"

"It is! it is! You stand, in reality, in that abject position to which your cruel and unfounded surmises would have abased the guileless Laura. Who will be degraded by the association now? Who can afford to keep up such an intimacy?"

"Aunt! aunt! it is infamous; it is barbarous to trifle with me thus! I thought you had more feeling, more affection! You might have corrected me, without having recourse to such scandalous invention. Oh, aunt, *dear* aunt, recal your words; say it was not true; say it was only to reprove the wilfulness of my heart. Do, do, for mercy's sake, or I shall die."

"Would that I could."

"Oh, I cannot, I will not believe it! Why, she was your own sister! How can you, how dare you traduce her so? Oh, I could crush beneath this foot the slanderous being who so basely vilifies the memory of that unpolluted mother! Aunt, aunt, I shall go mad at the bare idea of her guilt! I will not credit such atrocity; I should expect an immediate judgment from above, if I did. My mother, my sweet, pure-minded mother! Oh, aunt, how could you utter such blasting accusations, unawed by the dread of their choking you?"

"There is nothing to fear from speaking the truth, however terrible it may be; and your violence will not prevent my persevering in my assertion, but it will prevent me from feeling that commiseration for you I might have done, had you evinced a more subdued, a less resentful sorrow. I have only revealed the sacred truth, wrung from me reluctantly, at last, by your audacious and ungodly arrogance. Could I have hoped that a less severe lesson would have brought you to a more becoming frame of mind, this secret should have died with me, as it did with my poor sister."

"But how can you reconcile the assistance you must have lent her to maintain that secrecy with the scrupulousness of your own conscience, aunt? How could you lend yourself to such an imposition?"

"For your sake; oh, for your sake I consented to all, for yours alone! Oh, the tears, the prayers, the anguish of that repentant mother, clinging to my knees, holding you up in her arms, imploring me to spare your innocence, conquered my repugnance, overcame my scruples."

"But what real good has that silence done me? how much better to have been trained from infancy to a knowledge of the disgrace one day inevitably to overwhelm me! Then, my mind, familiarized to the degradation of my birth, accustomed to the idea that I was the offspring of ignominy, would not have aspired to pass the narrow limits prescribed to the outcast *waifs* of society, by a conventional decorum; and then I should not have had, as now, the unutterable agony of quailing before every eye, which will coldly scrutinize the worse than Cain-brand on this shame-stained brow. No, no, no; I certainly have not to thank that wretched mother for her unfortunate silence. She ought, in common justice, to have given me the option of judging how far I could bring myself to forgive her, for bestowing on me a cursed and blighted existence. She ought, and chanced the consequences, aunt."

"Ah, Mildred, where is the mother to be found, who has the courage to confess her guilt to her child? to risk, by that con-

fession, the loss of the reverential love and respect which still sweetly delude her with the idea, that she is not totally unworthy of that love, since heaven vouchsafes to bless her with it; the love that can calm her self-reproach, and almost lull her heart to forgetfulness of its past early transgressions? She never, alas, had such courage. She hoped rather by her precepts and examples, gradually so to form your young and docile mind, as, at last, to receive the shock with at least a tender forbearance for her who inflicted it; but that period never arrived. Your haughty, intractable disposition frightened her from her purpose, and she died lamenting the very silence your own temper compelled her to observe."

"My mother! and can it be possible that I tortured her so? can it be possible that I never suspected her? But how could I? Her whole life appeared one long sabbath day of serene and tranquil piety. I never heard her breathe a word which did not sound like a thanksgiving; her common conversation seemed a prayer, and yet she was so guilty!"

"So penitent, you mean! She was for ever dwelling on the mercy of the Almighty towards her; hence, her ordinary ideas assumed the form of religion; it was this singularity, united to the Madonna-like beauty, which won the affection of all for her; they did not discover the weeping Magdalene under the garb of that habitual devotion. But, she was not always thus; she was, like you, proud, uncharitable, and overbearing, glorying in her beauty, her accomplishments, her fascinations; she knew she was lovely, she knew that she was attractive, she knew that he was born in the lap of luxury, and she thought that her charms would never decay, her wealth never diminish; that she should shine and rule in every heart for ever, as she did in the full zenith of her loveliness—her innocence; and she forgot, like you, too, to make allowance for the less fortunate, the less favoured of heaven; and so God smote her, in the height of her triumphant career, and she bowed to the chastisement, for she was indeed humbled."

"Oh my heart, my heart! let me never err like my mother, for I never could repent like her. Her whole existence was but one act of expiation; she continually sent her heart to the footstool of Divine justice; hence her charity for others, her apologies for their deviations, her emphatic expatiation on their temptations. Oh, the wounded fawn doth indeed know how the barbed arrow can pierce,—it can feel for the smartings of another! I marvel, that my nature did not yield under the contemplation of such contrition; how inflexible it must have been—how inflexible, I fear, it still is!"

"Not if you fear it, my poor child; that very fear proves your amendment."

"Oh, aunt! to think that improvement comes too late for her peace,—to think that I should never guess the cause of her silent and constant sorrow,—would that I had known it! would that I had, I might have mitigated it; what a consolation it would have been to her, to have seen me weeping for her, with her, soothing, pitying, comforting, but never upbraiding, never dreaming, of a shadow of blame, for who could have dared to censure, or reflect on one who was continually censuring, reflecting on herself."

"Ah! you think so, now, Mildred, now, that you are subdued, and softened by the recollection of that tender contrite mother; but, you would have upbraided her, you did even now, for concealing the fatal truth from you."

"Did I! then heaven pardon me! I have more to reproach myself with. Oh, aunt, why, when you saw my unbecomingly folly and extravagance, did you not smite me to the earth at once, with the dreadful fact hidden in your bosom? And, I have dared to suspect others! I have dared to decorate myself with the jewels, which, perhaps, purchased a mother's dishonour! Oh, for pity's sake, unfasten this necklace, I feel as if it would choke me, quick! quick! aunt, or I shall really be strangled!"

And, from the swelling of the veins of the convulsed girl, it appeared as if her fears were not entirely unfounded. It was pitiable to behold the twitchings of her fingers, as she endeavoured to unclasp the rich bracelets, which encircled her beautifully rounded arm; and see her fling them afterwards, with a recoiling shudder, as far from her as she possibly could; whilst her dilated eye followed the direction they took, with a sort of fierce glaring triumph, as if she had suddenly unwound, and cast away, a twining, and envenomed reptile!

"Aunt, tell me all,—let me, at least, know my poor mother's history, her sorrows, her sufferings, and the lamentable cause of them."

"Not now, my dear Mildred, not now, you are not sufficiently composed to listen, nor I to narrate so sad a story. To-morrow, as early as you choose, I will inform you of what, I much fear, will wring your bosom with the most intense anguish; but, still it is as well for you to be made acquainted with the truth, painful as it undoubtedly is."

"Oh! yes, it will be as well, indeed, for me to know the truth, the whole truth; for, on that I must now regulate my future conduct, my future deportment. Oh! aunt, how shall I learn

to be humble, meek, submissive and modest? I, so tyrannical, so imperious, so overbearing!

"How shall I find patience to wait until that dreadfully lingering morrow? Would you could satisfy me at once. Oh! if you knew, if you could but guess, the agonizing craving of this heart, to know that which will infallibly destroy its peace for ever; you would, aunt, out of the mere pity to that apprehension, which always pictures the worst, put me out of suspense; you would indeed."

"My dearest child, it is better for both of us to defer it, as I propose; human nature is only capable of enduring a certain amount of either happiness or misery, without being overpowered; and heaven knows, what fortitude we should require to bear more of the latter, in one day, than we have already. To-morrow, then, let it be, if you love me."

"Well, aunt, I submit; never will my obedience be put to a more severe trial; receive it, aunt, as a proof of my new humility, my new contrition; and, as a proof of my love and reverence for you as well."

CHAPTER II.

AFTER a sleepless night, and an almost untasted breakfast, Mrs. Belmont, yielding to the earnest solicitations of the anxious Mildred, retired with her to the library, for greater privacy; giving strict orders to the servants not to admit any visitors, until they were told so to do.

"My dear niece," she commenced, "it will be necessary for me to go back nearly to the infancy of your mother, to connect the chain of events I am now, alas! about to relate; so that you may be able clearly to understand them.

"I was, as you know, the eldest of the family, and by no means so handsome as my parents desired to see a daughter of theirs; they both being remarkable for their personal attractions; and, perhaps, pardonably ambitious, that they should be transmitted to their children. After me, my mother had five sons in succession; and, then, after a lapse of six years, and when both she and my father was almost in despair, they were *blessed*, as they imagined, with another daughter, beautiful as a seraph, certainly.

"Nothing could now exceed their pride and delight; they mutually congratulated each other on the possession of such a

treasure,—they were never weary of contemplating it, of forming schemes for its future welfare, and looking forward to the time when it would crown all their most sanguine hopes; and every prayer they now breathed, had an additional warmth and fervour, for they invoked the Almighty in favour of their youngest, most beloved, and in all probability, last of their offspring.

“Never were parents so happy, so engrossed; my father in particular, unboundedly grateful to my mother, for bestowing on him such felicity, was full of the most delicate attentions to her; and, as it were, divided with scrupulous exactness, his impassioned caresses between her and her lovely infant.

“As soon as she was old enough, my mother and myself gave up all our time and attention to her education; training her up in those principles which we earnestly trusted, through the mercy of Divine Providence, would protect her against the dangers to which we could but foresee, her surpassing beauty would expose her to. My mother, especially, most sedulously endeavoured to check the early and exuberant growth of wilful self-sufficiency, which appeared the only foible in the little Mildred’s, otherwise sweet and most engaging character; and even that, in childhood, was not without its attractions; her pouting and pettishness when contradicted, were so mingled with a playful vivacity,—a winning consciousness, that she was in the wrong, but still sure of pardon; that it taxed all my mother’s firmness, her maternal prescience, in fact, to persevere in overcoming it. With my father, the influence of her beauty was so irresistible and unlimited, that he considered her quite faultless, and often almost reproached my mother, for what he termed, “vain and idle fears,” whilst my brothers, without an exception, literally adored her; nor was I wanting in an equally blind affection, for the lovely and graceful creature, who glanced about like sunshine through the whole house. Thus you can easily imagine, what a delightful girlhood she must have had, kept in total ignorance of all evil and sorrow, with the minds of every one by whom she came in contact, studiously, slavishly bent on promoting her happiness and pleasure. Now, when I have had the experience of witnessing the erroneousness of such a system of education, I can see the absolute folly, nay injury it is; for to a young girl so circumstanced as Mildred was, the world, when it does become known to her, appears like the secret closet of the murderous Bluebeard, suddenly unlocked to her aghast gaze, with all its hidden horrors fully revealed.

“How does she recoil at the awful display of guile, treachery, fraud, and crime! How does she weep over the blighted hopes, the disappointments, the sorrows, the remorse and despair she

there beholds! How does she ask her heart to restore one, *only* one of the many bright illusions lately overbrimming it, like a bridal casket of jewels, heaped up by the careless hand of beauty! But, it cannot be! There is no returning to that first happy state of ignorance!—and it is as well. The security of youth is too blindly secure,—life is a contest, a warfare; we must be armed for the battle, we must know what foes we have to encounter, to be prepared to subdue them; we must know the fallacy, the fleetingness, the vanity of all earthly hopes, all earthly possessions, the false glitter investing every object, the poison mingled in every cup, the serpent coiled in every flower. We must be on our guard against the seductions, the allurements of vice, the enticements of pleasure. We must be fortified against disappointments, prepared for the overthrow of our dearest hopes, schooled for adversity, strengthened in piety, and rest only on that which this world can neither give nor take away, the promises of that heavenly being who knows the only happiness his creatures are truly formed to enjoy.

“But I weary you, my dear niece, by these reflections, pardon me their indulgence, in giving way to them it seemed as if I dallied for a moment with your sorrow and mine,—as if, I found in them a sort of excuse for the poor culprit for whom we are now weeping. Yes, my love, harsh as the term is, I am compelled to apply it to *your* mother.”

“But, to proceed. When Mildred had attained her sixteenth year, and was as accomplished as great natural abilities, united with indefatigable assiduity, and the constant assistance of the best country masters, could render her, my father was agreeably surprised to receive an invitation for her to town from his sister, Lady Bouverie, a dashing, thoughtless woman of fashion, who had just returned to England after a lengthened sojourn of ten years on the Continent, having, as she remarked, heard of the extraordinary loveliness of her young niece.

“As he had long been secretly desirous of procuring some finishing lessons for Mildred in music and singing, and had until then been at a loss how to effect this object, owing to the exceedingly delicate state of my mother’s health, who could not bear the fatigue and inconveniences of leaving home, he seized the favourable opportunity now presented with avidity, and wrote to his sister to thank her for the invitation, without scarcely consulting my mother as to the prudence and propriety of accepting it for so young and inexperienced a girl.

“When it was proposed to her, she resisted for a long time, with that instinctive foreboding of some consequences to be dreaded, from giving her consent to such a dangerous step, which almost by intuition alarms the maternal heart; but she

was, at length, overruled by my father's proud inflexibility, my brother's entreaties, my supplications, and my sister's tears: for we all, save that tender and fearing mother, saw only happiness and prosperity in store for our darling; and we waived all jealous and selfish considerations to secure her aggrandizement.

"For some time after her departure we received the most gratifying accounts of Mildred's progress in her various studies and accomplishments, of her happiness, her enjoyment, of the admiration she excited, and the prospect there was of her forming a splendid alliance.

"This reconciled us to her absence, and even rendered the gloom endurable which the want of her animated cheerfulness occasioned us to feel. My poor, suffering mother was almost brought to confess, when listening with tearful eyes to these pleasurable descriptions, that her fears had been rather premature, and that she regretted the injustice she had done Lady Bouverie in indulging them.

"Then they were more seriously than ever awakened by Lady Bouverie writing to say that 'Mildred was far from well; that she had grown thin and desponding, shunning all society, neglecting every accomplishment, and only answering with tears to all her entreaties to learn the cause of her illness and depression, expostulations, to endeavour to overcome it, offers on medical advice, to cure it; and therefore, with the permission of her parents, she purposed taking her abroad, for change of scene and air, as the only remedies she could devise for such an indisposition as that which her sweet and most beloved niece was evidently labouring under.'

"My mother would not hear of her going on the Continent; she was frantic at the idea of such a space intervening between her and her darling, and, ill as she was, wished to set off to town immediately, to bring Mildred home.

"My father, to appease her, and also to satisfy his own anxious mind, declared his readiness to go and fetch her, which tended, in some degree, to calm the violence of her agitation.

"Although my first impulse was to accompany my father, my mother was far too ill to be left; so all I could do was to recommend him to be very gentle and soothing to my sister, and not extort any confidence from her, until she could breathe it in her mother's arms.

"How tedious did the time appear to us both, after his departure! how did we weary ourselves with vain conjectures, as to the probable reasons of Mildred's failing health and spirits; how did my mother mourn over the tears she had shed, without her being near to share them!

"Without revealing it to each other, we both, almost simultaneously, came to the same conclusion, that an attachment, perhaps an unpropitious, an unrequited attachment, occasioned the mental malady which bashfulness prevented her acknowledging.

"This idea lent a sweeter, a more pathetic interest to the dear expected. To have her early affections blighted, to have her young heart torn with anguish, to have her brightest hopes extinguished, ere she was scarcely aware of the sorrow she was nurturing, appeared to invest her, in our imagination, with a beatitude, a sanctity almost heavenly, to claim our purest sympathy in her behalf.

"We thought of the pensiveness it would add to her beauty, the softness to her character, the meekness and subdued grace to her deportment; and we prepared ourselves, with a holy resolve, to love, admire, and cherish her more than ever.

"Guileless, unsuspecting Mildred! I mentally exclaimed, as I silently pondered over her disappointment would I had been with you, to watch, to guard, to caution, to advise and direct. Poor child! left to yourself, how could you but fall into the snare?

"Like as the ocean which, slumbering serenely in the distance, when, not one, the faintest ripple, sparkling in the sun, moved by its upheaving breast, foretells that it is then dreaming of its gigantic and overwhelming power, when the returning tide shall arouse it to its wonted activity and strength, surrounds the heedless maiden, who is absorbed in gathering on its golden sands the gem-like shells strewing it, to decorate some childish-conceived fabric, which the fairy architect, joy, plans in her graceful imagination, to engulf her in instant destruction; so love, that seems wrapped in as calm and dreamless a repose, steals as insidiously into the unwary bosom, until, like that sea-girt maiden, the unsuspecting victim finds herself suddenly environed with perils, from which there is no escape, standing alone on the narrow isthmus of despair, on which the waters of oblivion are fast collecting.

"Such, no doubt, is the situation of our precious darling, I thought. How must we allure her from its danger? how must we win her from her grief? how must we gently and imperceptibly lead her back to the dear old cheerfulness which made the only gladness of our hearts.

"My mother, knowing the overpowering effects of early and happier associations on the lacerated and aggrieved bosom, when first brought in contact with them again, with a studious and holy solicitude, had every object removed out of sight which formerly delighted her child, superintending their dis-

placement personally, and taking pleasure in exerting herself so far beyond her wasted strength, for one so idolized.

"My father only wrote once during his absence, and then merely a few hasty lines to say when we might expect him and my sister. This very brevity, however, we considered rather encouraging; for, had he really found her as ill as we feared, he would have written at greater length, to prepare our minds for the shock: besides, she was *able* to travel, and that ought to satisfy us.

"Although they could not by any possibility, arrive until late in the afternoon; such was our eagerness to embrace the travellers; and especially Mildred, that, as soon, as we had finished a hurried breakfast, we tacitly took our station at the window, which overlooked the road the carriage must come; and remained with our eyes almost immoveably fixed on it, until we actually saw it advancing at such a rapid pace, as convinced us, those inside, could, at least, bear fatigue.

"My mother, with an exclamation of delight, involuntarily extended her arms towards it, with an inexpressible movement of affection; and I could perceive how violently her heart was beating, by the motion of the shawl which she still, as an invalid, wore.

"We were on the steps as it reached the door; but we were obliged to look at Mildred more than once before we could recognize the once beautiful girl we had so recently parted with.

"There was scarcely a vestige of her former loveliness remaining. What a deplorable change! how ill she must have been! how she must have suffered!

"My father alighted first, and, without saying a word, and with his hat pulled over his brow, he brushed past the servants, and hastily entered the house. My mother assisted my poor sister out of the carriage, and supported her bent and tottering form up the steps, she appearing feeble and exhausted beyond description.

"How awfully silent was this meeting! how portentous! Not one heart had the courage to conceive the word of welcome—not one lip the mockery to utter it. Welcome, indeed! where was the pretence for welcome, for gratulation? Silence suited best the solemn sorrow of such a scene.

"When we reached the drawing-room, in which my father was seated, buried in profound thought, he rose, and, with a trembling hand, locked the door. Mildred, at this action, uttered a piercing shriek, and fell fainting on the floor.

"I and my mother rushed forward to raise her up, and assist in restoring her.

"'Touch her not!' exclaimed my father, with wild vehe-

mence; "touch her not! she is polluted, disgraced; she has the plague-spot of infamy upon her!"

"'But she is my child still,' cried my mother, passionately. 'She is still my child.'

"'If you love her, then, do not endeavour to restore her to consciousness. I tell you, woman, her insensibility is a mercy. Would it could last for ever!'

"This unusual, this unpitiable harshness was lost upon my distracted mother. She knelt down by her ruined child, and, laying her young head on her bosom, with the tenderness lavished on her infancy, and flinging back the heavy masses of hair from her pale brow, deluged it with tears, kissed her cold lips over and over again; and then, completely overcome by her varied and agonizing emotions, fell insensible by her side.

"My father, roused to desperation, snatched them both up together, called upon them both to revive, if they did not wish to kill him, kissed and blessed them both, and then, with almost ferocious anger, turned to me to upbraid me with apathy, because my efforts failed to second his impetuous impatience. But I forgave him; for had he not enough at that moment to make him unkind, unjust, unreasonable?

"'Here, then, is the realization of those proud hopes, indulged in for years!' he exclaimed, wringing his hands, as he contemplated the insensible beings before him. 'Here, then, is the consummation of those brilliant anticipations, formed for that guilty girl alone, to the exclusion of all our other children from our hearts. Wife! wife! we are only rightly punished; God always probes the most gangrenous wound. Those hopes were too arrogant, too daring; we almost demanded their fulfilment from the Almighty. But he will only be intreated, not commanded.

"'Moses was permitted to behold the verdant valleys, the waving palm trees, the fertilizing rivers, the meandering streams, sparkling in the unclouded glory of the summer sunshine, of that promised Canaan he was never to enter. Never was he to banquet on its milk and honey; never was he to repose beneath its sylvan shade; never was he to bathe his hot and weary limbs in its refreshing streams. No, no, no; from the top of Pisgah, his dying eyes strained in vain to drink in all its beauties, with an inexpressible and hopeless longing; that longing which, under the garb of heavenly inspiration, had led him cheerfully and courageously through such fatigues, perils, and sufferings, even unto the desired termination of his toilsome pilgrimage. And alas! alas! I have been equally permitted to obtain, from the summit of the Pisgah of blind paternal affection, a glimpse of the promised land of earthly

happiness which fond ambition was to crown in that fallen child. Oh, look at her even now, and say if I was very, very sinful in being led away by such hopes as her beauty awoke! Oh, Mildred! Mildred! you have broken your father's heart!

"The tears, which he could no longer restrain, fell in torrents over the poor child he was so pathetically bewailing, and revived her. She prostrated herself at his feet, and raising her supplicating hands, exclaimed, 'Mercy! oh, my father, mercy!'

"'Ask it not of me; ask it from him who can *alone* grant it; ask it of your offended God!'

"'Mother, I dare not. Do you, do you; oh, in pity, *once* more pray for your wretched Mildred!'

"'I have never ceased,' replied my mother, sobbingly; 'I have never ceased; but my prayers have evidently been of no avail. How should they? I only sought your earthly prosperity, and behold the reproof of an offended judge.'

"When we could become a little more composed, when we could think of the position in which this mighty, this unexpected calamity had placed us—when, in fact, we had prevailed on my mother and her agitated child to retire for the night, and I and my father could talk over the distressing affair without the dread of wounding either of those two sensitive creatures, by the allusions it would be absolutely necessary to make to Mildred's critical situation—we discussed, with as much fortitude and deliberation as we could, what was best to be done.

"Happily my brothers were all absent with their regiments, so they, at least for the present, were spared the blow which had bowed us to the grave.

"This was the *first* shame which had fallen upon us, and how to speak of it we scarcely knew; my father quailed before me, and I blushed and trembled before him; we felt embarrassed for each other, we pitied each other, we mourned for each other,—for we were mutually outraged, mutually stained with obloquy by the hapless object of whom we thought, with an awful compassion, of whom we spake with a low and timorous whispering, as if before the dead we dreaded to disturb. Nay, we were even more sadly, painfully guarded than if actually in the presence of death, for then our sorrowful remarks would not have been blended with the dishonour, which now created that mysterious and shuddering fearfulness of spirit in us both.

"Suddenly my father exclaimed aloud, as if under the influence of one of those startling and alarming transition of feelings, which makes a man desperately and savagely resolute,—'It is

no use disguising the fact Helen, your miserable sister will soon become a mother; she has already most seriously injured her health, by endeavouring to conceal her situation, what then is to be done? There is no time for delay, for delicate self-subterfuge, for trying to impose on ourselves, we must face the truth at once, horrible as it is,—at once form our resolution. What then do you advise? Tell me candidly, shall we reveal or hide her infamy and our *own*? shall we become panders to her guilt? impostors on the world? shall we, *can* we assume the cloak of hypocrisy, and walk erect as we did formerly, with our souls bowed with the consciousness of shame and deception?

“Think what a terrible alternative I propose to you! think then before you decide. Think, oh, think what an alternative it is for a father, with an hitherto unblemished name, with sons fighting nobly for their country, and reaping unfading laurels for their valour, and with one, I trust, *yet* virtuous daughter to establish, and with a wife, remember, of an unspotted character.’

“Oh, my dear father, I dare not decide, I dare not give an opinion, the subject is too, *too* tremendous for me even to think deliberately upon. Did it concern me alone, I take my God to witness, that to screen my sister, I would sacrifice myself; but you, but my mother, but my brothers, my gallant brothers, I must be silent for all your sakes; for if through me, secrecy were adopted and afterwards discovered, I should load you with heavier ignominy than poor Mildred. Ask then, I implore you, some one more experienced, some one less deeply interested, and abide by that decision,—Mr. Powell, for instance, as an old and tried friend, as a Christian minister, as a truly God-fearing man, and one against which no crime can be brought, would surely advise conscientiously. Apply to him then in this great strait, and may the Almighty guide him in the opinion he shall pronounce.’

“My dear Helen, I am convinced I could not do better; as soon then as your poor mother is able to bear it, I will consult him; and may the Almighty, as you piously observe, guide the opinion he shall give!”

“This opinion was to endeavour by all means to keep it a secret if possible, and not to render the forlorn girl desperate, by holding her up to the scorn and opprobrium of an unpitying world, ‘give her a chance of repentance, wait and see if that repentance is sincere, if it can bear the test of time, solitude and reflection. At present she is only subdued and humiliated before her earthly father, at the detection of her fault, not contrite, not humbled before her heavenly one, from whom it could not be concealed. Her tears now flow for having incurred your displeasure, for having offended you, not to wash away the stain of

her guilt from the sight of Him who charges his angels with impurity. Let us give her the opportunity of evincing, by her future undeviating rectitude of conduct, charitable consideration for the error of others, constant and unfeigned piety, that she is duly sensible of the one, committed by her own unguarded youth; duly and gratefully sensible of your forbearance and affection, in not having cast her forth, in the first moment of pride and anger, amongst the offal of pollution to rot and decay, like the vilest weed that corrupts the air, with the noxious exhalations of vice and infamy,—that vice and infamy which might also have been equally reclaimed for the kingdom of the redeemed.'

"'But how are we to preserve this awful secret?' exclaimed my father. 'Where is the friendly and fostering shelter to be found, so impervious to prying malice, as to shield and protect that withering and blighted thing? Oh, where can we hope to hide the shame, sorrow, and remorse of that stricken child from the malignant eyes, ever ready to sparkle with triumph at the woes, the disgrace of others? And oh! how shall we ever know that the Almighty will sanction even the deception you advise for his glory?'

"'That you shall know by the fruits of her repentance, and your own increased prayerful gratitude. For your other doubts, they are more easily allayed. You must remove Mildred for a time to some distance from home. I have a small tenant in North Wales, a widow, and childless—nay, but for me—friendless; she is devoted to my interest, and of such a primitively simple integrity of mind, that I would trust my own life, my own honour to her keeping. Send her there.'

"'What!' exclaimed my father, flushing with all his former pride, 'do you suppose I would send a daughter of *mine* to an obacure farm-house in Wales?'

"'Yes, and be thankful if so virtuous a roof can be found for her concealment. Forgive my severity; but, is it for the shipwrecked wretch, struggling with the overwhelming waves, to pause to examine the *quality* of the raft which a watchful Providence drifts towards him? No; rejoicing in his rescue, he leaps upon it; and then safe, although on the bosom of unfathomable seas, he sinks on his knees in prayer for his merciful escape from death, on that rude but precious plank.'

"'Pardon me the temporary forgetfulness of my actual position, my friend; Mildred shall go, and instantly—but with whom?'

"'I will take her myself; I will consign her to the custody of one who will, be assured, be indeed a guardian-angel, a mother, friend, nurse, companion, and servant, all in one, to her.'

"Although my tender, devoted mother's heart yearned to accompany the poor lost thing, to be with her in that hour of extremity and suffering, that hour of trial and agony, whose every pang would be so intensely aggravated by the consciousness, that all she was then enduring was but the penalty due to her guilt; she knew the austerity of my father's disposition too well to dare to propose it; and when I, overcome by the anguish depicted on her countenance, ventured to suggest the comfort and consolation it would be to Mildred, to have her mother with her at such a time; it had no favourable effect, my father sternly observing, 'that he had no intention of studying her comfort; all he sought was, to bring her to repentance by punishment, by affliction, by isolation.' So, clasping the hand of the commiserating clergyman convulsively between her own, and then frantically straining Mildred to her bosom, she consigned the agonized girl to his care, imploring him, as he valued his future happiness, not to lose sight of his miserable charge, until she was safely in the arms of the worthy creature, to whom she sent a mother's blessing as well. Never shall I forget the despairing look, the frantic struggle, the wild cry that burst from my sister, as the carriage drove away. My mother, putting both her hands to her ears, fled like a maniac to her own room; whilst my father, completely conquered by the fortitude he had determined to maintain to the last, fell into a chair, and sobbed like an infant; but, struggling against this unmanly weakness, as he considered it, he rose with a look of calm dignity, and said, in a tone of authority, 'Go to your mother, Helen, she requires soothing, she needs comfort, do all you can to console her; recollect, her health is delicate, and therefore these scenes are doubly trying for her. Go, then, do not tell her how feeble I have shown myself—and mind, from this hour I forbid you both mentioning the name of that unfortunate girl before me, under any pretence, or even alluding to her in the slightest way; it is for the peace of us all that I insist on your observing this prohibition. She chose to forget her parents! and it is but a just retaliation that they should endeavour to forget her.' I flew to my dear mother's apartment, and with as much tenderness as I could, informed her of this cruel, this barbarous restriction, for which, however, we amply compensated ourselves, when together, by never conversing on any other subject. Daily and hourly did my mother torment herself with the anguish poor Mildred must be enduring; how ingenious was she in picturing the horrors of her situation, in her state of abandonment and neglect, left to the mercy and compassion of a stranger; she, the idolized, the worshipped, the indulged!

She, so used to affection, so accustomed to love,—how will she ever be able to reconcile herself to the vulgar pity, the ignorant commiseration it is now her doom, alas, to receive for all her consolation, for all her encouragement !’

“ ‘Do thou watch over her, do thou strengthen and support her, do thou befriend her now,—now deprived of all, even the commonest token of paternal humanity. Oh, if ever heaven didst grant the prayer of a heart-broken mother, grant mine, I implore thee, for thou alone art my hope, my refuge, and assistance.’

“Often, almost desperate with the uncertainty and agony into which she was plunged, on account of that most precious child, she was tempted to fly to her clandestinely ; to partake her solitude, or to die with her in her deplorable exile ; and it required all my eloquence to dissuade her from so rash a proceeding, my own heart secretly seconding the affectionate desire, only too warmly.

“Then she would implore me, in the most pathetic terms, to go to my father, to kneel at his feet, pourtray her despair, and entreat her permission to be allowed to visit her adored, her regretted Mildred, only just to soften her rigorous destiny, until, by resignation, she had learned to submit to it.

“ ‘Helen, my kind, good, forgiving Helen, tell him, if he does not consent, I shall not survive his cruelty long.’

“But all was in vain. My father remained inflexible, considering my mother’s wish arose from a morbid sensibility engendered from bad health,—that Mildred’s banishment was by no means so severe a punishment as the heinousness of her fault deserved ; and he was determined, at any cost, to carry it out, to prevent the possibility of her deviating in future. He hoped that in time my poor mother would submit to that which he assured me was inevitable. But the contest was too much for her wasted frame, and she gradually sunk under it, enjoining me, with her last expiring breath, that, whenever I should have the opportunity, at ever so remote a period, to seek out my sister and her child, if they, or either of them, should then be alive ; to bear to them her fondest blessing, her choicest, her most fervent prayer ; and give them that home, that affection, which had been forbidden her, and which denial had killed her.

“I promised most solemnly to fulfil this injunction to the very letter, as soon as Providence should enable me ; which was not until I also lost my father ; when, finding myself mistress of an ample fortune, and resolving never to marry, I hastened into Wales, and, amidst a torrent of tears, broken sighs, and half-uttered exclamations of delight and anguish, folded you and your mother to my throbbing bosom.”

THE SECRETARY.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROCK," "GUARDS, HUSSARS, AND
INFANTRY," "THE BEAUTY OF THE RHINE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

"He holds me well.
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man. Let me see now
To get his place, and to plume up my will
In double knavery."

OTHELLO.

VARIOUS and conflicting were the emotions which agitated the rich merchant's daughter, and banished sleep from her pillow on the night succeeding the expedition to Greenwich.

The happiness which she experienced from the knowledge that she was beloved by the only being who had ever excited interest in her gentle bosom, was, however, far from unalloyed, for, though strong in the confidence of his attachment, and determined to regard all his scruples in a favourable point of view, nevertheless some misgiving would occasionally intrude, and raise doubts as to the propriety of the part which she was called upon to play.

To a young and hitherto artless mind, nothing can be more painful than the first deviation from the straight path of openness and integrity, to wander through the labyrinths of concealment and deceit, and Mary's strong mind could not otherwise than acknowledge that, where such precautions were necessary to conceal the engagement from the knowledge of Lord Blanchard, it must be wrong on her part to countenance, in any way, conduct calculated to render unhappy the parent of him, on whom she had bestowed the full measure of her affections.

Plausible as her admirer's excuses sounded in her ear at the moment when his hurried explanation was uttered, yet now in

* Continued from page 314, vol. lvi.

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the solitude of her own chamber, unbiased by the influence of his presence, and revolving in her mind each circumstance of the day's adventure; to the imagination of the timid, yet confiding girl, there appeared more to dread, than to contemplate with pleasure.

Secluded as Mary Vernon had been from her infancy, it was impossible for her to unravel the seeming mystery, that where youth, virtue, and—what she had been taught to contemplate as a paramount blessing—wealth, were united, any reasonable objection could be offered in opposition to the wishes of the parties most interested; and as little could she imagine that, if gold was brought by the one party to lavish unsparingly on the other, the mere coronet on the other side could form the obstacle to a union, which would cause the glittering bauble to be shared with her whose riches were to add a ten-fold lustre to its splendour.

Poor Mary—she had yet much to learn; and unaccustomed to commune deeply with her own thoughts—for hitherto not a retrospection of sorrow had ever fallen to her lot—the more she pondered on each trivial occurrence of the by-gone day, the less satisfactory appeared the conclusion she arrived at, until wearied and exhausted with her cogitations, she laid her head upon the pillow moistened with her tears, and, not until the faint streak of daylight cast its first rays within the casement of her chamber, did she find rest in a deep, though unrefreshing slumber.

At breakfast on the following morning, Mr. Vernon could not fail to remark the pallid countenance of his daughter, and when, with true paternal affection, he kissed her marble forehead, and kindly inquired the cause of her illness, a gush of tears, as she rested her head upon her father's shoulder, astonished in no slight degree the faculties of the wealthy merchant, who—unused to "scenes," and as ignorant as a child of the various degrees of agitation which, under the head of nervousness, are claimed by the fair sex as their especial right—naturally concluded in the first instance, that his child was seriously ill, and severely did he reprimand himself for having allowed her to remain out until so late an hour as that at which the party returned from Greenwich on the previous evening.

With difficulty, and after using much persuasion, the alarmed father was induced to attribute her agitation to other sources than the occurrence had, in the first instance, suggested; yet wholly unaware of the conversation that had taken place between Lord Dropmore and Mary, and perfectly ignorant of the rencontre they had met with in the Park, he was yet at a loss to guess the cause of her agitation.

On this subject he was destined speedily to be enlightened,

for, ever accustomed to make her parent's bosom the depository of all her trivial fears and hopes, Mary was in reality delighted at the opportunity thus afforded, of pouring forth the full tide of her hopes and doubts, and, in a few words, confided to her father the incidents with which he had not hitherto been made acquainted.

Now it was that Mr. Vernon perceived the effects of the system which, for so many months, he had pursued; and, though it had unquestionably been his aim to create in his daughter's mind a favourable impression in behalf of Lord Dropmore, and that too in the hope of eventually effecting the marriage on which he was so earnestly bent, yet was he greatly surprised at perceiving the deep feeling which his daughter displayed on the subject; and it was with something approaching to a misgiving as to whether he had acted judiciously, that he turned his thoughts towards the probable result of his plans.

In prosecuting his labours to bring about the much coveted connection, Mr. Vernon had never for a moment surmised the possibility of any woman objecting to form what, in the eyes of the world, would be considered so advantageous an alliance; yet, at the same time, he was as little prepared for the discovery of how readily the seed, which he had planted, should have taken so firm a root, and flourished with so strong a growth.

It required but a short time, and still less penetration, to discover that Mary Vernon had irrevocably fixed her affections on Lord Dropmore, and equally sensible was her father that, for causes already explained, the match had not been hurried by either party; but now that for the first time the merchant was made sensible of the extent of the mischief which, in his ill judgment, he had so materially aided in effecting, he saw the imperious necessity of speedily bringing the affair to a final issue.

Money was with him undoubtedly an object of intense admiration and affection, for, through the possession of wealth, he had been accustomed to consider all ends as attainable, yet he loved his daughter even more than he regarded his gold, and though the loss of the unentailed property was the price at which her happiness was to be purchased, he resolved now so to press forward the business that, either with or without the marquis's consent, the union should take place.

To determine on the line of conduct to pursue, and to carry that determination into effect, are frequently far from one and the same thing, and, in this case, Mr. Vernon was fully aware that he had to deal with others whose cunning in diplomacy was at least equal to his own.

Had it been a matter of finance, or any mercantile dilemma, which he was called on to elucidate and unravel, there could not have been a clearer head selected for fathoming the intricacy than that of the alderman; but, in a delicate affair like the present, he was sadly at a loss how to proceed, so, wishing his weeping daughter farewell, and kissing her pallid cheek, with a parental exhortation to compose herself, and he would do all in his power to secure her peace of mind, the puzzled merchant seized his hat and cane, and betook him to his counting-house, and into the large black leather chair, from whence his mental speculations had emanated for a series of many years. Contrary to his usual custom the letters of the day remained unopened, and as far as he was concerned, the business of his mercantile engagements stood still; and the obsequious clerks, as occasionally they broke through his privacy, and entered the small *sanctum* in quest of some ponderous ledger, gazed on the serious countenance of their master; and, with a becoming imitation of his elongated visage, returned to their exalted stations, dropping dark and mysterious threats, not very complimentary to some of those gentlemen who make it their duty daily to congregate "on 'Change."

Nothing could have been further from the truth, than the conclusion arrived at by these disciples of pounds, shillings, and pence; for, as our readers are well aware, Mr. Vernon's ruminations had their origin in far different, though equally weighty affairs.

The more the merchant pondered over the dilemma in which he found himself placed, the less near was he to arriving at any satisfactory conclusion; neither did he in his heart admire the plan of forcing Lord Dropmore into a secret marriage, when, by so doing, not only would so large a portion of the property be alienated, but likewise his own pride—the ambition for which he had sacrificed so much—would be, in a great measure, extinguished. Neither was it gratifying to reflect that, although in the eyes of the law his daughter might be recognised and acknowledged as Lady Dropmore, still it was very questionable whether she would ever be permitted to assume her proper station in the Marquis of Blanchard's family, until elevated to the rank of Marchioness herself.

Then, again, came the recollection of the large sums of money already advanced to meet the pressing difficulties of his intended son-in-law; and in what way could that debt ever be expected to be repaid, save by liquidation through those means which he had himself proposed, and with such perseverance prosecuted to the utmost?

The greater part of that melaucholy morning was by Mr.

Vernon thus consumed ; and when, at the accustomed hour, he rose to quit the room which, at no period during a space exceeding more than a quarter of a century, had he so unprofitably occupied, he was as undetermined how to act as when he left his daughter's breakfast-room in the morning.

Not much more to Mary's satisfaction had the day glided on ; and in reply to her father's anxious inquiry whether Lord Dropmore had called, the answer in the negative was given in a tone of visible disappointment : and, had the truth been made manifest, it is more than probable that the greater portion of the last six hours had been devoted to taxing her memory for recapitulations innumerable of the yesterday's proceedings, and a fervent hope that, ere her father returned, Lord Dropmore would in person explain all that yet seemed shrouded in concealment.

But in this natural expectation, poor Mary was doomed to disappointment : hour succeeded hour, and though of late her noble admirer had scarcely allowed a day to pass without some token of his existence reaching the abode of the merchant, yet in the present instance the time was fast gliding away, and yet neither by word or line was she apprised of a continuation of his regard. Could she have offended him ? or might her being seen in the park have caused a disagreement between Lord Blanchard and his son ? For, upon the peer's turning away, an involuntary exclamation from Lord Dropmore betrayed at once the relationship in which they stood to one another. Then, again, in what light could Mary have been viewed by the proud marquis, and by the beautiful being leaning on his arm ? For whom could she have been taken ? And as these thoughts in quick succession chased through her mind, the deep scarlet which dyed her face and bosom, bore evidence of the spirit working within. Then, again, why did not any introduction take place, when so fair an opportunity offered ? And, stranger still, wherefore was her glance met with the averted eye and palpable wish to shun her presence ? And, more unaccountable than all, why had the manner of Lord Dropmore undergone so sudden and so great a change from the instant when they were encountered by his father ? His before gentle manner and fervent expressions of attachment appeared in a moment as if nipped in the bud ; and the kindly pressure of the hand, and the soft, affectionate tone of voice in which he had commenced pouring forth his soul, were in a second changed. The hand which he had taken within his own was dropped, and the speech but scarce began, died away upon his lips. Yet no explanation did he offer, but, with cool politeness, led her back towards the house, and, for the remainder of the evening, he appeared absorbed in some painful reflections, and spoke only in monosylla-

bles to all of the party, excepting Sir George Elms, and to him hardly beyond a whisper.

The return of her parent for the time recalled her to a recollection of her duties; and the accustomed hour having arrived, the bell rung for dinner, and, after a brief delay, the repast was announced. Offering his arm to his young daughter, the merchant and Mary were descending to the dining-room, when the sound of a cab stopping at the door was succeeded by a no very gentle summons for admittance, applied through the instrumentality of the knocker.

As the noise of the approaching wheels caught Mary's ear, she eagerly bent forward her head, intently listening, but when the carriage stopped at the door, a flush of pleasure mantled in her cheek, and a slight smile played round her dimpled features. Not a syllable did she utter, but, probably, a slight pressure was laid upon her father's arm, for looking down upon the intelligent countenance beside him, a gleam of pride, yet, at the same time, blended with sorrow, stole across his brow. In another instant the door was opened, and the half-parted lips, ready to utter the kind welcome, closed in disappointment, as the well known form of the baronet stood revealed, instead of that person whom the fair hostess had felt so thoroughly convinced would appear.

There are few things more chilling to a man possessed of acute feelings, than to witness the change of manner which surprise, taking etiquette prisoner, often creates in a room where another person was anxiously expected in lieu of him who appears. The outstretched hand suddenly withdrawn—the ready smile exchanged for a forced chilling play of the muscles, intended to represent civility—the hurried rush towards the entrance of the room converted into a sudden stop—all these indications of disappointment, and proofs of the intruder's *unwelcome*, are far from flattering to the cause of the scene. And many would feel so palpably annoyed at the marked difference between what his own reception was, and that which another would indisputably have experienced, that it would be long ere he regained that presence of mind necessary to improve the opinion which his host apparently entertained towards him.

In no such feelings, however, did the baronet participate, though none could have read with more correctness the sentiments then occupying Mary's thoughts. And indeed so legibly was her disappointment depicted in her countenance, that it required not a seer to solve the mystery of the sudden change. As to Mr. Vernon, it were to him one and the same which of the two persons made his appearance, so indeed that he obtained a hearing; and having long since perceived the power which the

baronet not only possessed, but enforced over Lord Dropmore, it is possible that the alderman rather preferred the society thus presented, than that of his more aristocratic friend, feeling certain that whatever measures they agreed upon for his lordship's adoption, would eventually be carried into execution by the visitor before him: besides which it has been shown that Sir George Elms had an interest in bringing about the marriage, though at the time it never occurred to the other that, since the disclosure regarding Mary's pecuniary independence, it was possible that a much stronger feeling might have been created for its annulment.

Different and multifarious as were the thoughts then occupying the minds of the three persons present, a few seconds only were consumed in their exhibition; for, gliding across the hall with a perfect suavity of manner and smiling countenance, the baronet hastened to apologise for his intrusion at so late an hour, since he presumed—and, had his olfactory nerves not been extremely out of order, he could not have doubted—that the hour of Mr. Vernon's repast had arrived.

So profuse was he in expressions of regret, and so many well-worded speeches did he make—as unintelligible as unwished for—that the merchant began to fancy in sober sadness, that his dinner would suffer more by the time wasted in apologizing for the intrusion, than could have resulted from the intrusion itself; and much dreading that further delay would render his repast, when ultimately encountered, less palatable, he requested the baronet would waive all ceremony, and condescend to partake of what he was pleased to call his homely fare.

As Sir George Elms had so timed his visit after leaving Lord Dropmore, as to make sure of arriving at that identical hour, and having long since mentally resolved on forming one of the dinner party that day, he did not deem it necessary to make more formal apologies regarding his dress, than were calculated to expend another five minutes in favour of the repast cooling.

These conscientious scruples being at length overcome, the baronet persuaded himself to be ushered into the dining-room, when, having glided into a most agreeable receptacle for his person, he readily added his assistance towards the diminution of the numerous dainties placed before him.

While the servants remained in the room, nothing was made the topic of conversation, save affairs of general notoriety; neither did Sir George expatiate as much as usual on the excellent qualities of his absent friend—a theme which hitherto had invariably commanded attention, and moreover procured for the narrator considerable interest in the bosom of the fair listener. So great a change was not unobserved by Mary, but

the inferences which, in the innocence of her heart, she drew from the circumstance were very opposite to the conclusion arrived at by her father. The daughter imagining that the baronet's evasion of the only topic which she would have cared to attend to, arose from an innate delicacy of feeling towards herself, but to which Sir George Elms could no more lay claim, than he could have usurped Lord Dropmore's place in the affections of the fair girl beside him; while the alderman, better versed in the wiles and intricacies of worldly dealing, rightly judged that his guest only waited for the lady's absence, to enter more unreservedly on the subject.

And so it proved—for, after a due period having passed succeeding the departure of the servants, and finding no inclination on the part of the baronet to touch on the subject uppermost in her thoughts, Mary Vernon rose from the table, and having been assiduously escorted to the door of the apartment by her father's guest, was left to the undisputed possession of the drawing-room, and the luxury of indulging in her own thoughts without interruption.

"I have a commission to execute, Mr. Vernon," commenced Sir George, with a few preliminary hems! on finding the room unoccupied but by themselves. "I had a message, or rather, I should say, I have a remark to communicate, which, of course, it is for you to act on or not, as you may deem most agreeable to yourself. In fact, I find, from Lord Dropmore, that the Marquis of Blanchard is desirous of having the honour of forming your acquaintance, and also that of your fair daughter, who has but this instant quitted the apartment."

"At last, eh—Sir George?" replied the other, in a tone of exultation. "At last, then, this tedious business promises soon to be brought to a conclusion!"

"Why, yes," he continued, "possibly it may now be ended; still, I hardly know, for many and serious difficulties, my dear sir, yet remain to be contended with."

"Difficulties!—what difficulties?" exclaimed Mr. Vernon. "Lord Dropmore is anxious to marry Mary, and she is far too good a girl to start any objections to my wishes—all his pecuniary engagements to me will be annulled—you will gain the sum agreed on, and, to crown all, Lord Blanchard, you say, is desirous that the match should take place."

"Nay, nay, pardon me, my good sir," responded the baronet; "you entirely mistook me; what I was anxious to impress on your mind was, solely a wish on his lordship's part to make your acquaintance. Nothing know I of Lord Blanchard's desire that this proposed union should be effected."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the merchant, in a very different tone

of voice ; "then, if such is not his lordship's wish, what on earth does he want to be acquainted with me for? Does he want to show me, as a sort of strange animal, to pass off a *dejeuné*?"

"I should imagine," was the reply, "that at any party of the marquis's you would find yourself a welcome guest, but hitherto, I am unaware that the contemplated marriage has ever reached his knowledge."

"It hasn't, eh?—it hasn't? Well, then, Sir George, for once, at all events, let us be frank with each other, and, by way of example, it shall be my business to unburden myself first."

"Unburden yourself!" echoed Sir George. "Well, and I shall be delighted, as I ever have been, in imitating your frankness."

"No doubt of it!" replied Mr. Vernon, with a smile which spoke as plainly as a smile could speak—"I don't believe one word of it." "But to the point," he continued; "the fact is, I am weary of these perpetual delays, and vexatious disappointments; and, unless the matter is now brought to a speedy conclusion, I shall draw off altogether; and then, in justice to myself and my daughter, I must look for repayment of the various sums I have at different periods advanced to my Lord Dropmore. I am a plain man, Sir George," continued Mr. Vernon, and to which assertion the baronet bowed low his head over his claret glass, in concurrence.

"Of that, Mr. Vernon," he observed, "I am fully aware; however, the matter now in hand has arrived at a very delicate climax; and if you will favour me with your final intentions, as you just now hinted, I shall be better able perhaps to forward your designs."

"Well, then, my designs as you call them, amount to this,—either Lord Dropmore marries my daughter, or his lordship repays the numerous sums he has borrowed at my hands, and you lose the amount agreed on between us."

"Nay, but my good sir," chimed in the Baronet, in a deprecatory tone—"surely, you are too hasty in the business—some thing must have vexed you since yesterday—I trust —"

"Don't talk of *trust*," replied the alderman, pettishly, "I've had enough of that: but ain't these delays sufficient to vex any man? And then not to comprehend what all the waiting's for —"

"Surely, you would not lose the unentailed property?" exclaimed Sir George.

"Why, no, not exactly," answered the other; his love of money getting the ascendancy—"certainly not, if I could see any prospect of obtaining it."

"Every prospect, if you will but listen to counsel," said Sir George; "and as you are well aware, what motive can I have, otherwise, than to bring about the union?—surely, Lord Blanchard's wishing to make your acquaintance, is a great step towards the accomplishment of your wishes."

"Aye, but what does he want to make my acquaintance for," replied the wary merchant, "if it is not to give his consent to the marriage?"

"Once more, Mr. Vernon, I repeat, that Lord Blanchard is wholly unacquainted with the engagement; but if once introduced, and the delights of your daughter's society appreciated; what reason is there for supposing the father should not waive his childish prejudices regarding rank, particularly when he sees how devotedly attached his son is to the lady, and moreover witnesses the beauty and many amiable qualities of the object of Lord Dropmore's affections?"

"Ah! there may be something in that," was the reply; for all parents are flattered when an only child is praised: "but yet you don't tell me *why* his lordship seeks my acquaintance."

"Simply thus, then," replied the other—"you are perhaps aware of the accidental encounter which took place last evening in Greenwich Park, while we were enjoying our repast at 'The Ship?'"

"Yes," replied Mr. Vernon, "with that my daughter has already acquainted me; and I must confess, I think Lord Dropmore might have found some other way of conducting himself in the business than by shunning his own family, as if he was ashamed of being seen with the very woman on his arm whom he had just offered to make his wife."

"Very true," slowly acquiesced the listener, having but now been made acquainted with the extent of Lord Dropmore's conversation with the lady—"Very true, my good sir; but if the matter is inquired into, perchance you will find that it was the father, and not the son, who shunned the meeting, and therefore is it that, having been convinced of his error, he now seeks your acquaintance and that of your daughter as the best apology for his apparent rudeness."

"There is some sense in that, I allow," replied the merchant; "but how does Lord Blanchard account for his son and my daughter having been wandering about the Park at that period, and alone?"

"Ah, there is the extraordinary part of the matter," answered the baronet—"the most singular fancy that by possibility could enter any man's head. Why, my dear sir, who do you suppose the marquis fancies your daughter to be?"

"How can I tell?" answered Mr. Vernon.

"Why," replied the other, "he really imagines that your daughter is my intended bride, and that Dropmore, as my intimate friend, was merely escorting the lady for a promenade, while possibly I might have been engaged with yourself in the drier details of business."

"And so, because it is supposed Lord Dropmore's friend is about to be married to my daughter, I am thus *honoured* by an introduction to his lordship's father? I understand it now," continued the alderman, seriously angry: "but if the marquis of Blanchard thinks to make acquaintance with old George Vernon, the merchant, on those terms, he will find himself most materially disappointed."

"But, my good sir, consider," interrupted Sir George—"consider —"

"So I have considered," replied the alderman, speaking hurriedly, and in a loud tone—"Zounds! sir, is it not enough to lose my money and my time—to be bamboozled and laughed at: is not all this enough? But as if to make the matter more complete, this marquis steps in and gives away my daughter to an acquaintance of his own, without for a moment condescending even to inquire whether such arrangement suits my wishes. On my word, Sir George, you are a fortunate man, sir, and I dispute not, but you accepted this marquis's offer with becoming gratitude."

"Hear the sequel, Mr. Vernon," interposed the other, "only hear the sequel, before you judge so hastily, and by that you will discover there is small ground for irritation. In the first place, how was it possible that I or any one could account for so extraordinary a whim having possessed Lord Blanchard's mind? in the next place, you will acquit me of the charge of not having undeceived him, when I say, that my knowledge of the matter was gained through Lord Dropmore, as I have not even seen his father for some days; and after all, I am not at all convinced but that this very circumstance may redound to our advantage—" And hastening to explain what to Mr. Vernon appeared to require a vast deal of elucidation, the worthy baronet thus far condescended to give utterance to his plans.

The pith of his argument consisted in the great advantages to be derived from the circumstance of having succeeded in finding an opening by which to become personally acquainted with the peer—a step in itself of considerable importance, and emanating as it did from Lord Blanchard, was likely to prove highly beneficial to their views. "By this means," argued Sir George, "you will have the opportunity of introducing your daughter under the most favourable circumstances to the marquis, since, by feeling hurt at his late conduct, arising, as he imagines, from

erroneous conclusions, he will naturally be anxious to view his new introductions in the most favourable light. Now, my dear sir," urged the baronet, "none who have the happiness of being acquainted with Miss Vernon, but must acknowledge not only her superiority of mind over most people, but likewise her pre-eminence in beauty among even the most lovely of her sex. What, then, if Lord Blanchard, prepossessed in favour of your daughter, and delighted with her agreeable manners and amiable character, should eventually lament that so great a prize in love's lottery had not fallen to his son's share? And supposing—which, indeed, is more than probable—that, after a brief acquaintance with the lady, the peer should utter a regret that your daughter's affections are engaged, what will not be his delight at hearing from her own lips that those affections *certainly are* engaged, and irrevocably fixed upon his son? I would not have Miss Vernon made a party to the plan," pursued the baronet, "since her prejudices or womanly pride might start objections, and possibly mar our purpose; and when at length the *denouement* takes place, there is not any occasion for either you or myself to appear as if at any time aware of the marquis's erroneous supposition.

"Think, then, my dear sir," he added, "only picture to yourself the felicity you will experience on finding that all the foolish prejudices which existed against what his lordship terms ill-assorted marriages should crumble into dust, and that solely through the fascinating influence of your daughter!

"To my mind," said the baronet, "I think the plan feasible in the extreme. Of course, common delicacy will prevent any allusion to your daughter's supposed engagement at your first meeting, so that neither you nor your beautiful charge can be compromised in the most distant manner.

"On the other hand, if you will not submit to the harmless deception, how will Lord Blanchard's consent ever be gained? Your acquaintance with his family must rest as it is, and though the marriage may be accomplished, the possession of the unentailed property never will.

"For me, you know, my dear Mr. Vernon," continued the wily adviser, "for me, you know, this recommendation must have its origin solely in a desire to serve my friend, and not myself, since in no way can it benefit me—further," he added, bowing gracefully before the astonished alderman, "than for a very brief period having the honour of being envied by all mankind who have, or may hereafter possess, the happiness of being allowed the honour of claiming the acquaintance of one of the most beautiful and gifted of women."—And thus concluding his long harangue, he next addressed himself to the claret decanter,

the contents of which he as earnestly discussed as he had previously advocated the great desirability of his being supposed the affianced husband of the wealthy heiress of his host.

These and many other arguments and persuasions were held forth during the evening, in the expectation of gaining the alderman's consent to the proposed measure; but many were the objections started by the latter, and numerous were the demands for cool claret, while the protracted conversation was in progress. Nor did it want much of two o'clock when it was finally arranged the introduction to Lord Blanchard should immediately take place; and in so far did Mr. Vernon consent to take part in the plan as to promise to remain neuter in the business. He bound himself not to advert to Lord Dropmore's engagement; at the same time he was not voluntarily to deny the existence of the baronet's, unless, indeed, the question was put to him direct.

By these means his vanity as a father was led to hope that the attractions of his daughter would in a few days overcome those rooted prejudices in the peer's mind which it had occupied years in engrafting, and thus at once bring the affair to a crisis, which consummation he determined should be effected ere the family of the marquis left town.

With respect to Mary, it has already been stated that Sir George judged it more expedient she should remain uncognizant of the entire business, and, moreover, that she should be introduced without any explanation as to the circumstances under which the acquaintance was to be formed.

These preliminaries at last ended, the baronet, inwardly rejoicing at the success of his diplomacy, apologised for not going up to the drawing-room, where, by the bye, he would not have found any one, Mary having retired full two hours before; and, shaking the stout alderman heartily by the hand, he jumped into his cab, and, ere an hour had elapsed, found himself detailing to Lord Dropmore the result of his mission, over a well-dressed *petit-souper* and an admirably iced bottle of champagne.

CHAPTER XV.

"O, Sir, content you,
I follow him to serve my turn upon him."

OTHELLO.

"I AM sorry you should have so much reason for disquietude,

Mr. Garston," remarked Lord Valoire to Frederick, one morning after a long conversation passed between them. "I regret it extremely, since I am confident the annoyances are unmerited. However, if you take my advice, I would strongly recommend you to continue the same line of conduct you are now pursuing, and rest confident that all must eventually redound to your advantage."

This observation, or rather opinion, of Lord Valoire's was brought about from his having for a long period observed that something of a disagreeable tendency evidently preyed upon his young friend's mind; and having from the first moment of their acquaintance, felt an interest in the secretary's welfare, Lord Valoire did not deem himself disgraced by cultivating his friendship; and finally, with a view of aiding him, if possible, he succeeded in extracting from Garston the cause of his evident uneasiness.

On this occasion our hero had at length been tempted to inform his friend that, however happy he might otherwise have been in Lord Blanchard's family, yet, owing to the evident dislike Lord Dropmore invariably evinced towards him, coupled with that of his friend, Sir George Elms, the position which he held was far from enviable.

Of course the name of the true, though innocent, cause of the aversion never passed Frederick Garston's lips; and although Lord Valoire readily conjectured that jealousy on the part of Lord Dropmore occasioned the line of conduct which Garston had so recently mentioned, still he was at a loss to surmise why the baronet, whose system it was never to make an enemy where he could ensure a friend, should have adopted a similar bearing. These, however, were points on which he judged it better to ponder than immediately to pass an opinion; but, before parting from his guest, the young nobleman suddenly inquired whether Garston had ever unintentionally or in any way offered offence towards the baronet.

"Never, my lord," replied Garston, "at least never to my knowledge. It is impossible that, under any circumstances, I can have clashed with any project or plan of Sir George's."

"Do you know anything of Sir George's history?" inquired Lord Valoire.

"Nothing whatever," answered Frederick.

"Then listen," replied his lordship; "for, as you appear by fate, accident, or chance, to be brought into contact with him, in no very friendly manner, and as I am fully aware of your incompetence to cope with a person of the baronet's worldly experience, should he persevere in his annoyances, it is but right you were put in possession of a few passages in that

gentleman's existence. Thus, then, in the first place, you are unaware that the present Marquis of Blanchard derived his title and estates from an elder brother, whose demise, I am informed, created much excitement at the period of its occurrence. It is now many years since the then Marquis of Blanchard and the father of Sir George Elms contracted a friendship pretty much in unison with that continued by the son of the latter and Lord Dropmore,—with this difference, that, in the case of the former, the baronet was supposed not only to possess, but likewise to exert, an influence over his companion, either for good or evil, as might best suit his humour. At length, so unbounded was the power possessed over the one as to hold him completely in subjection to the other. Nor was it long ere that influence was resorted to in order to benefit the baronet at the expense of his friend.

"The late marquis married early in life, and, had he been left to his own guidance, all might have gone well. But no. The baronet was for ever at his elbow; lures and temptations of all descriptions were held out, to bring him back to a life of dissipation. Neither were the baits extended in vain. His former course of profligacy was resumed; and, ere many years elapsed, his banker's account and his steward's remonstrances brought him to a painful acquaintance with the more than embarrassed state of his affairs.

"In this dilemma, the father of the present baronet came to his aid, and by one or the other, or through the machinations of both, some plan was concocted, having the turf as their arena to work on, which was to have ensured them a most enormous gain.

"What the plan was I never heard, neither do I imagine there are many now alive who care to moot the question; but the result was a disclosure on the part of an accomplice, and the termination of the business brought irretrievable ruin to those concerned.

"Shunned by his peers, cast out of all society, the marquis found himself actually a beggar. All that could be touched of his property was seized by his rapacious creditors. The unentailed lands were mortgaged to more than their full annual value, and he was ejected from his once splendid mansion literally without a guinea.

"From that time," continued Lord Valoire, "nothing was known regarding his fate. The baronet and his accomplice vanished from among that portion of society where, for years, they had held undisputed sway; and in due course of time the present peer assumed the title, and has at length extracted from what was formerly a nearly alienated property a splendid and affluent income."

"But what became of the wife?" inquiringly asked Frederick.

"I know no more than I have stated," replied the other, "though it is conjectured that the marquis has much more extensive information than I can boast of; but, as no opposition was made to his taking the title, and as both himself and the late marchioness were instantly received at court, it was surmised that he was fully able to prove his brother's death.

"With regard to the baronet," continued Lord Valoire, "I am equally uninformed; neither is there much to divulge regarding the present one, further than that he appeared at Eton and Oxford; but from whence and under what circumstances he came, none can say. Strange it is, however, that a friendship was rapidly cemented between him and Lord Dropmore; but whether the latter is aware of the history which I have now detailed, I am utterly unable to say."

"But is it not singular, my lord," remarked Frederick, "that the marquis should countenance the intimacy existing between his own son and that of the person whose advice and example have affixed so deep a blot on the escutcheon of his family?"

"I am not aware that he *does* countenance the intimacy which you mention," replied Lord Valoire; "but, whether such be the case or not, I conclude he has good reasons for what he does. In the meantime, Mr. Garston," he continued, kindly offering his hand, "there will be no occasion for your repeating the conversation which has passed between us, and which it is more than probable Lord Blanchard will himself touch upon hereafter more fully than I am competent to do. Bear in mind what I have said: avoid any opportunity of giving offence either to Lord Dropmore or his friend, and remember that in me you will find one who is willing to be of service to you." And bidding Garston good day, the latter turned towards Grosvenor-square, and rapidly commenced his walk homewards.

There was much in what Lord Valoire divulged calculated to attract the attention of a man situated as Frederick had been from the moment when his old friend Dr. Glitzom first divulged the mystery of his birth—a mystery which he now discovered was not applicable to him alone, but to others also, though in a far different degree. Strange as may appear feelings and passions calculated to actuate our actions, and which are occasionally empowered to change the very inmost sentiments of our hearts; yet so it is, and probably from a romantic notion that their cases were in some slight measure assimilated, the aversion which Garston had latterly felt towards the baronet was rapidly converted into a feeling of curiosity mingled with interest.

Who can account for the rapidity of ideas which suddenly, and yet so effectually can change the very essence, as it were, of our

being, and in a few moments make us look upon an object with interest, which but a short time previous we viewed with abhorrence and disgust.

Possibly Frederick might have been occupied with some such cogitation, when he was accosted in a voice which was about the last he expected to hear addressing himself.

"Ah, Mr. Garston," exclaimed the new comer, "nothing could have been more opportune than this meeting; I have been hunting for you everywhere, and having had the good fortune not to search in vain, I am little inclined to forego the advantage gained, but shall insist on your accompanying me home to dinner"—and placing his arm through that of his companion, Sir George Elms commenced a series of amusing anecdotes and remarks on each passing acquaintance, with an agreeable manner and exhibition of real natural talent which few possessed in higher order, or could command with so little exertion.

Surprised as Garston was at so unexpected a rencontre, and ignorant from what particular circumstance he experienced this rapid change in the baronet's manner, he would in the first instance have avoided acceptance of the invitation, but such was no part of Sir George's intention; and after much expostulation and entreaty, aided possibly by Garston's recollection of Lord Valoire's advice, he finally accepted the invitation, and promised to appear in Green Street at the appointed hour.

On reaching Grosvenor Square, the first thing Frederick deemed right was to acquaint the marquis of his engagement, not only as a piece of civility due from a guest towards his host, but also as it was the first time since being domesticated in the mansion, he had had an opportunity of being similarly engaged.

Emily Beecher was seated in her uncle's library at the time Frederick entered the room, and although his appearance at that hour and in the same apartment was an event of no singular occurrence, a slight colour for a moment passed across the beautiful countenance of the lady, and a mingled feeling of embarrassment and pleasure flitted over her mind, to which, until latterly, she had been a stranger.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Garston," said the kind-hearted peer. "I began to miss you much; and as for Emily, I'm confident she must have prayed sincerely for your appearance since, in a truly barbarous manner, I have for the last hour compelled the poor girl to read to me aloud."

"My dearest uncle," replied the lady, taking up some complicated needlework, "I'm sure nothing gives me greater pleasure than being with you; besides which, it is hardly fair to

tax Mr. Garston's whole time by keeping him in constant attendance."

"True, Emily, true," answered the marquis; "and upon my word, Mr. Garston, I feel myself obliged to plead guilty to what the lady has so truly alleged; the fact is, that as we advance in age so do we increase in selfishness, and when we have the power of summoning the presence of those whose society we enjoy, we are too apt, in the forgetfulness of the pleasure we derive, to pass over the probability of the employment being considered as an irksome task by the donor."

"I can assure you, my lord," commenced Frederick—but he was instantly checked by the marquis saying good-naturedly—

"That will do, Mr. Garston; I well know what you would say in the matter, and in all sincerity I fully believe everything you would assert, and am confident that a sacrifice on your part for the advantage of others would readily be made on all occasions. But come, where have you been? And as I'm now an invalid, and Emily has not been out to-day, we must trust to those who have been abroad for information. Where have you been?"

"With Lord Valoire," was the reply.

"And with no more agreeable and well-informed person could you have passed your time?" remarked the marquis. "And very fortunate do I esteem the circumstance of your having secured so inestimable a friend. His father and I were very old acquaintances; and the son bids fair to emulate the virtues of him who is now gone. But come, whom else have you met?"

"Sir George Elms," rejoined Frederick.

"Sir George Elms!" exclaimed Lord Blanchard.

"Sir George Elms!" echoed Emily, raising her lovely face in astonishment.

"Sir George Elms," replied the secretary, smiling. "And stranger yet, the baronet did me the honour of passing his arm through mine, and walking down St. James's Street; and stranger still than all, I promised to dine with him this day in Green Street."

At this announcement the marquis looked, what in truth he really felt, perfectly astonished; but having made Garston recapitulate every particular regarding the meeting, he fully acquiesced in the propriety of the invitation being accepted. "But," continued he, "I acknowledge myself unable to fathom the cause of this great and sudden change of manner, to what his conduct has ever been towards you, at least during the few times when I have had an opportunity of judging. There are passages in that young man's life which, I fear, had far better

were it possible, be expunged," continued the peer; "and many circumstances have contributed to impress me with no very favourable opinion of him. Yet I have no proof whatever of his having perpetrated the acts which I would unwillingly allude to. It is but surmise; and were we all to be judged through that medium, few of us would come from the ordeal unscathed. Still, there are family circumstances, Mr. Garston, which should draw a bar—an impassable bar—between any member of my family and his; and yet," continued the good old peer, "God knows whether it might not be unjust to continue that odium towards the son which was deservedly heaped upon the father. These are points difficult to treat on calmly; and situated as I am, they form matter for serious thought, which it were hardly possible to contemplate without bias; but enough of this for the present. I have only to remark, Mr. Garston, that where sudden changes from neglect to preference occur, it is always as well cautiously to watch for the motive which influences the alteration, prior to giving up yourself to a boundless confidence in the sincerity of the act. But who is to be of the party?"

"Of that I am unacquainted," was the reply; "but should my reception from my host's friends in any degree assimilate with the morning's cordiality on the part of the host himself, I shall have no cause to regret the invitation."

"Take care you *have* no cause to regret your acceptance of it," replied the marquis; and here the conversation on this subject for the time ceased.

THE FUNERAL OF THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BY C. E. NUGENT.

Hark to the passing Bell!
Another soul has sped away
T' await the final judgment day:
Approach, ye careless ones, draw near,
Behold the narrow grave is here;
And there, adown the village street,

The Funeral of the Village Patriarch.

The coffin pall, 'bove the trembling feet

Of his aged breth'ren borne,
Tells they themselves must shortly die,
He but the herald to Eternity.

And thus they cease to mourn :
Though long will their children's children wail
The white-haired "Patriarch of the Vale."
Beyond the usual lot of men,
He'd well nigh reached fourscore and ten ;
For his feeble steps might late be seen
Wending their way to the Village Green ;
And there, beneath the old elm tree,
Would smile on their harmless revelry ;
Would watch their sports, and haply then
Turn to his Childhood's days again.
These hearts are loath to bid Farewell,
And, weeping, list to the passing Bell.
Twice for him it had tolled before ;
The first, as now, he might not hear :
It told of his Parents' heartfelt joy,
The birth of their first-born, best-loved boy ;
And when at the altar, kneeling low,
He'd breathed the sacred marriage vow ;
And trooping forth, a joyous throng,
They wound the self-same path along,
Hope in his heart, and by his side
His dearly-loved and blooming bride.
Pealed forth that bell, whose cheering sound
Echoed these ivied walls around ;
Then white-robed maidens strewed the way
With many a flower and garland gay,
Chaunting the while as they passed by
Their hymn of artless melody.
All of that troop have sought the bourne
From whence no traveller may return ;
On either hand the cold grave stone
May tell the fate of many a one ;
The *last*, e'en now, has bid farewell :
Hark ! stranger, Hark to the Passing Bell !

JASMINA.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF AN UNKNOWN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF J. B. TISSOT, BY
HANNAH CLAY.

JUNE 10th, 1831. At length I am in Algiers. I inhabit a delicious Moorish habitation in an alley of the street Neguard. A high wall, five feet high, separates my terrace from that of an old Moor who has two daughters, the one eleven years of age, and the other fourteen. The pretty children! I often see them sporting about in the evening, at the hour when the sea-breeze freshens the air; but it is necessary to hide as if I were a spy. These little savages fly before a look with the swiftness of the gazelle. The only means of retaining them, is to appear not to remark them.

June 11th.—My romance continues. The little coquettes are obstinate, though already worsted at the game. Ah! women, women, you are all alike. This morning they threw me a magnificent bouquet. The beautiful remembrance fell at my feet like an intelligence between us. I withdrew: they wished me to return.

When I think of it, I find that the step was a little venturous for two young girls with a horror of Christians, a single look from whom is leprosy to Mussulmen. But our acquaintance is established; I have not courage to forego it. We must now be careful to manage our opportunities.

June 13th.—My little savages are tamed. They now talk with me, and I find their Frankish language singularly diverting. It is a mixture of Italian, French, and Spanish. I could hear them talk it all day.

But I like not this mask of white linen upon their faces, nor these villainous wrappings which cover them like winding-sheets. I cannot get a glimpse of their features, though I am sure that they are lovely. Their figures are so graceful, their movements so light; and then their patrician feet and hands! There is the old Moorish blood beneath, the blood of the Moors of Granada. These signs may deceive one elsewhere, but here, in Africa, they cannot mislead.

June 14th.—Curiosity does much with women. I know their names. The elder girl is called Jasmina, and the younger one, Zora. They gave me this information this morning in their Frankish tongue, which so much pleases me. Jasmina has asked to see my house. I ought to refuse her; for between the Mussulman and the Christian there is a deep abyss. I have not this melancholy courage. I love these children; I, who thought I should no more love anything. They will come at midnight.

June 15th.—They have been. At midnight I heard a slight noise, so slight, one would have said that a bird had forced open the door of his cage. I could not have vouched that they walked; I only saw them float towards me, white and graceful as a summer night's dream. In a few seconds, Jasmina was with me; she placed her little feet upon a flower-pot with the lightness of a swallow, and made a bridge of it to get into my house. I kissed her white and perfumed forehead; she allowed me to do it without the least coquetry. Simple and candid nature!

"Ienir de la caudella dans la cosa de toi?" she asked.

"Yes," I replied.

"Zora, come! *Sami! Sami!*

The little girl of eleven years of age approached us. "Certainly I shall not go," said she.

"Who has taught thee our tongue?" rejoined I. "And why wilt thou not accompany thy sister?"

"Because I will not."

"That is no reason."

"It is mine. Where there is an enemy to fear, there is need of a sentinel. You know not this country, nor the Moors who live in it. If we were surprised in the company of Christians, there would be no pardon for us. Here, give me a clew of thread. I will fasten one end of it to my sister's hair, and the other I will hold in my hand. In case of danger, I will pull the thread. Be not lazy, Jasmina, thou knowest thy peril."

A sudden remorse came over me. I was then exposing these children to a real risk. But what danger could there be for such young girls?

All was done as we arranged it. Zora remained as sentinel upon the terrace, while Jasmina, timid, embarrassed, wondering, entered my room.

The ravishing little maiden! How I blessed God for having sent her to sport upon the earth! She was unveiled; the light from the wax tapers illumined her charming face. How naïve was her curiosity! She took up an album of caricatures, and

burst into fits of laughter, asking me in what country these grotesque beings were to be met with. I did not care to tell her that they were figures of Frenchmen, drawn by Frenchmen. She appeared much taken by a musical box. I offered it to her acceptance. She wished to have it, and put forth her little hand for it. But she remembered that her father would ask her how she came by a Christian possession, and she refused it. Besides she would not have known where to hide the box, and to make use of it was impossible.

How beautiful *Jasmina* appeared! pure, candid, without disguise: no corset to alter and deform her person. Her half-discovered ancles, her arms that showed through ample folds of gauze; her feet, her hands possessed a suavity of lines, the harmony of which nothing with us can give any idea. A white tissue, embroidered with gold and silver, was thrown over her hair, which was bound with a rose-coloured ribbon. Amid her long black tresses she had placed a *jasmine*; it was her escutcheon—her emblem—the flower of which she bore the name. A brooch of coral fastened around her throat the folds of a muslin tunic, which scarcely descended so far as her knees. Her pantaloons were of brocade; her sash of blue and red silk. It was a dream of the Thousand and One Nights,—she was a celestial vision of the time of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid.

I gazed upon her as upon a dream of happiness that comes but once; and I said to myself that the first turban-wearer who should bring with him a little money, would have power to buy my dream: this first comer I execrated beforehand. All at once the thread attached to *Jasmina's* hair was violently shaken. With more than the rapidity of a panther, the young girl bounded into the gallery, descended the stairs, mounted the terrace, and the wall of separation. A moment after, I heard the door close; then no voices—no noise—no anything. My happiness is flown. Will it return?

October 15th.—I waited a day—two days. *Jasmina* returned not. Four long months have passed; three of them in anguish and burning fever. What has become of her? Where shall I get information concerning her? I interrogate everyone, and no one replies. The Moors are quitting their country habitations, and returning to the town: the Jews prepare to construct their symbolical cabins of reeds: the house of *Jasmina* is still deserted. Will the old Moor have quitted Algiers for the east, and abandoned a land profaned by Christians? I know not what to think.

October 17th.—I could remain at home no longer; I went

out, urged by fever. I was walking, like a drunken man, in the lower quarters of the town, when, at the end of a deserted street, I felt some one touch my arm. A Moorish girl, who was preceded by a kind of duenna, had uttered these words in passing, and without making a pause :—" At midnight upon the terrace."

It was Zora. I recognised her. But wherefore alone? What has she done with her sister? No matter, I will go. I shall see Jasmina; are not the two girls inseparable? To see Jasmina again! What happiness! And I have suffered so long!

* * * * *

October 30th.—I know not how I have the courage to go on with this journal. Still it is necessary to do so, that the motives upon which I have acted may be understood. I continue the melancholy story. I shall write it at one sitting, and finish it.

The evening of the day when I had encountered Zora, I went on to the terrace at ten o'clock. At midnight the child glided up to me like a spectre.

"You loved my sister; is it not so?" said she.

"Loved her? I adored her! I——."

"Good; scale this wall; make no noise, my mother sleeps. Pray the genii to deaden the sound of your footsteps, and follow me."

I hesitated: I was afraid. Zora pressed my hand convulsively.

"Will you see my sister or not?"

See her! I was going to *see her*! This thought brought back all my courage: I followed my guide with a firm step. After having traversed a complete labyrinth, we arrived at a cold and humid vault, where the air we breathed was as that of death. The uncertain glimmering of a wax taper illumined a well that I had not before remarked. Near this well were cords and hooks, dripping with water.

"It is here," said Zora.

"What is here?"

"Yes: throw these hooks into the well, and endeavour to draw up what is at the bottom."

"But what *is* at the bottom?"

"Do what I tell you, and you will soon know. Do it, or return whence you came."

I obeyed: I let down the cords: I heard the hooks touch the water, and reach the bottom." I drew:—I pulled backwards: I employed all my strength. The hooks had encountered a heavy substance that mounted slowly, balancing about and knocking against the sides of the well. All at once the heavy

body detached itself, and fell back again, with a dull sound. There was no more room for doubt—I had been fishing for a corpse!

An icy sweat bathed my forehead; I felt my knees bend under me. To the extremity of the hooks adhered a shred of greenish linen, and some long hair. A woman had been drowned in the well!

"Linen and hair!" said Zora, in a hollow voice. "Go! you are not skilful: the negress and I did as much yesterday."

It was a fearful scene. A well, so frightful a tomb—a corpse had escaped our hold—a child following with anguish the descent of a rope, that brought up nothing—a light which burned like a funeral taper. Death in all!

I was exhausted; I sank to the ground. Zora threw a little water over my face, brought me to myself, and led me away.

I found myself, I know not how, in a chamber where there were two beds. I mechanically drank something that was presented to me, and sinking down upon a little bed, covered with gold-embroidered silk, I waited to hear more. Zora had evidently something horrible to tell me.

"Upon the bed where you are lying," began the young girl, "my sister passed her last night. Four months ago, when you and Jasmina thought that I watched upon the terrace, know you what I did? I slept! yes, unhappy that I am, instead of looking on all sides—of straining my neck—of listening to every sound, I became more and more drowsy, until sleep overcame me. Suddenly a hand pressed my arm as in a vice, and a voice said, coldly—'Where is thy sister?' It was my father! He advanced a few paces, and his feet became entangled in the thread, which I well-nigh broke with pulling at it. I trembled like a leaf, but he appeared to have remarked nothing, and said to me—'She is not here, go into the house.'

He had not descended three steps, when my sister was upon the staircase. But too late, we had been denounced; a neighbour had espied us, and had revealed to my father the frightful crime committed by his daughter, who dared to enter the chamber of a Christian.

"My father was a *marabout*," continued Zora, "that is to say, a saint. This title imposed upon him rigorous duties, an implacable severity towards his own family above all, for his honour and his piety were not to be sullied. In the eyes of the Moors, Jasmina, having spoken to a Christian, was one herself and condemned. Her father had a right of life and death over his daughter; the Franks could do nothing for her. There remained no more but to decide how she should die, by the poignard, by the noose, or by drowning. Her father dared not

stab or strangle her, she thought; to drown her was nearly impossible. For this it would be necessary to take her to the sea, to conduct her through populous quarters of the town; and then she would cry out, she would call the Franks to her assistance. Jasmina hoped that she should not die: a whipping with rods was all that she anticipated.

I did not so deceive myself; I shuddered from head to foot, for I had killed her. I endeavoured to come to you to gain the terrace; our door was fastened with a heavy padlock. I rushed into the corridor that led into the street. All was fast, and day began to dawn.

Our religion forbids the killing of any person in the night. Imagine then the anguish with which I beheld this beautiful dawn, hitherto welcomed as the benediction of God.

My father entered our room, and called out, "Jasmina! arise." Jasmina obeyed, and went into the gallery.

"This way," said my father. He was already at the entrance of the vault in which is the terrible well. The punishment was determined upon.

"Mercy! mercy! my father," cried my sister, "I am not a Christian." And she uttered heart-rending cries.

My mother awoke, she rushed after them; she raged like a lioness of the desert when deprived of her cubs. "What are you about to do with the child?" asked she in the clear, dry, sonorous tone of despair.

"Peace! woman," replied my father, who had seized Jasmina's hands, and was fastening them behind her back. "This girl is a Christian, and you have nothing more to do with her. Retire."

My mother endeavoured to throw herself upon her child; she was knocked down by a violent blow, and carried into her chamber, where they shut her up with me. She fainted, but I heard the cries of my unhappy sister, cries that would have moved the pity of a *Kahyle*! I climbed to the cross-bars of the door; I gnawed the wood-work, the masonry, the iron. They were killing Jasmina.

My father had dragged his victim into the vault; Jasmina's voice came fainter and fainter from beneath the arches. Yet her cries still penetrated to us; she called out, "Adieu! my sister; adieu! my mother; adieu! Daba, (the name of our negress.) Then I heard a kind of hollow groaning that appeared to come from the opening in the court. The pulley made a grinding noise,—there was a loud splash in the water,—then nothing more. The deed was done.

I fell upon my mother, and fainted in my turn; we remained a quarter of an hour without consciousness; then, seized with a

paroxysm of rage, we exerted all our strength, and succeeded in bursting open the door. We had the desperate hope that they had only wished to frighten us, that there was nothing real in what we had heard. My father was in the gallery, calm, tranquil, bowed down as if in a mosque, repeating his morning prayers, and kissing the ground beside the yet warm and perfumed sandals of his poor daughter. We looked around, we sought every where; there was nothing to be seen. Alas! *Jasmina* was indeed lost.

"Oh my God! wherefore did'st thou not punish me instead? Why did'st thou not permit an informer to say to my father, 'Zora deceives you; she goes not to the bath twice in the week, as she pretends. Instead of this, she enters into the houses of the Franks, she receives a Christian education. It is she whom you should kill. My sister had then been still alive.'"

Zora was in an agony of grief. The negress wiped away her tears, kissed her hands and her feet, and endeavoured to make her comprehend by an eloquent pantomime, the danger she was in of awakening her mother. She succeeded in this, and Zora recovered from her paroxysm.

"My father rose from his knees," continued the young girl, "and ordered us all to prepare for a sojourn in the country. Then turning to me, 'Zora,' he said, 'I have killed thy sister. I have forgiven thee for this once; I shall not pardon thee a second time.'"

He caused a grave to be dug in a solitary place, and had it lined with dry bricks. There he intended to deposit the poor *Jasmina*. There he was himself interred. Seized by a sudden illness, he retired to his bed, and died after three months of severe suffering.

This is wherefore we are returned here, my mother, the negress, and myself; this is why I said to you, a little while ago, "Will you see *Jasmina*?"

"What I now wish is, for you to return to us my poor *Jasmina*, for you to restore us her corpse otherwise than by piecemeal. I will tell my mother that I and the negress have finished the work."

"To-morrow," I said to Zora; "I will be here at midnight. I will return thee thy sister."

The next night I carried with me a provision of ropes, of rings, a hoop, a linen cloth, and some shot. I was determined to precipitate myself into the well, if I could not succeed. At all costs, I would be once more near *Jasmina*. But God heard my prayers, and I succeeded.

It is necessary to comprehend how imperious, among the Mussulmen, are the duties towards the dead. It is necessary to

know their worship of the tomb, their pious anxiety in this respect, to explain the touching effusion of gratitude with which Zora threw herself at my feet, and kissed my hands. I could not free myself from her entwining arms; and all the while she whom I had loved was there, under my eyes.

But it was necessary to complete this terrible occupation. Zora and the negress brought a large chest, admirably wrought. They prepared within it a couch of spices, and gently deposited upon the rich perfumes all that remained of the loveliest fairy of whom a man could dream at the midnight hour.

The following morning, at sunrise, a negro brought two mules before the house of the Moor. The door opened, to allow exit to a large chest, which was placed upon one of the animals. Zora and her mother mounted the other. I followed at some distance, and arrived soon after them, at their country mansion. Concealed amid the bushes, I hearkened long to the cries that rang through the house, a part of the honours rendered to the dead. At three o'clock, the cortegé proceeded to the new place chosen for the sepulture, under a tuft of mastic trees; and, the ceremony over, all retired in silence.

As to myself, who have no more to do upon this earth of suffering, who have wrestled against horrible remembrances, and even against remorse, for *I* killed this young girl; I write these few lines that no one may be deceived as to the cause of my death. I voluntarily leave this world, and trust that no one will grieve on my account.

SONG.

FLIRTING IN ALEPPO.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF LADY HESTER STANHOPE."

Listen to a silly Turkish story,
Written o'er the seas and far away,
All to please the fancies of girls who like romances—
Fal de ral de ral, de ral de ral de ray.

'Twas a British rover, in Aleppo,
Saw a Turkish maiden pass, one day,
Veiled, that not a creature could discern a feature—
Fal de ral, etc.

So he fell in love all in a minute,
And he made her signs to run away ;
But the maid her head she shook, and nothing said—
Fal de ral, etc.

Still her sparkling eyes in loving glances,
As her veil she opened, said not nay ;
So he still pursued her, and he fondly wooed her—
Fal de ral, etc.

Then he sent a shawl and two gold ear-rings,
From a *besserân*, with naught to pay ;
And he writ a sonnet, with her name upon it—
Fal de ral, etc.

"Allah will befriend you, gentle stranger !
If you mean to marry me, you may.
Come before the *cadi*" (said the Moslem lady)—
Fal de ral, etc.

"Young am I with fifteen summers over ;
Blooming on my cheeks the roses play ;
Dresses have I flowery, money for a dowry"—
Fal de ral, etc.

"Maidens are so simple, men so wicked !
Should it be to lead my steps astray,
Prithee, gentle stranger, have you weighed the danger?"—
Fal de ral, etc.

"Cruel is the law on two frail lovers :
First of all, alive they will you flay ;
In a sack they'll sew me, in the river throw me"—
Fal de ral, etc.

"Much as I adore you" (said the rover),
"Flirting in Aleppo is not gay :"
And he left the city ; and so ends my ditty—
Fal de ral de ral, de ral de ral de ray.

THE SALUTARY LESSON.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

CHAPTER II. (*continued*).

"You were then four years old, and lovely to a degree; but the change in my sister was truly marvellous. She had acquired that angelic expression of countenance which never after left her,—that soft benignity of manner, so heavenly, so fascinating, so endearing.

"After much entreaty, I prevailed on your mother to accompany me to England. I brought her, yourself, and the devoted widow Owen here, to this very house; and, from that hour to the present, my conduct has never varied in affection. Never have I regretted the sacrifices I have made for you both; never have I grudged my liberality to the poor decrepit creature now basking in the sunshine of my fireside, for she spent her health and strength for you; she wasted her youth and her substance on you and your mother, neglecting everything to console her and nurse you."

"What! aunt, what!" at last interrupted the excited and agonized girl, "could old Bridget have upbraided me with my birth? did she know that I was the offspring of shame and sorrow?"

"Yes: from the first."

"O aunt, aunt! then I am indeed a wretch, a monster of ingratitude, but I did not know *it*, that must plead my excuse, if any thing can excuse such barbarity. Why I have often charged her with being a burthen to us, called her indolent, taunted her with affecting feebleness to excite your pity; and all, all because she could not move with the alacrity which my unreasonable caprice required,—and yet she kept silent, and yet she refrained from speaking: nay, with angelic patience, bore and forgave my bitter taunts, for often and often when I must have wrung her very soul, would she creep shoeless to my bed side, when she imagined I was asleep, and kiss me and bless me, and then murmur something over me which I could not understand, but which I knew must be a prayer from its fervour, and the tears which fell so hot on my cheek, as she bent intently over me. You can judge of my condition, aunt, by the remorse which has

almost made me forget for the moment, the awful history you have just related.

Aunt, aunt, who was the villain, I *must* call father? Why did he not marry his deluded victim if in his power? And why, aunt, could you suffer her to impose so dreadfully upon the world? O aunt! to me such deception appears by far the most culpable part of my mother's conduct, it does indeed, aunt, it was so systematic, so deliberate; I shudder to think what must have been her constant dread of detection!"

"I do not attempt to palliate it. I cannot; I never could. But yet I always dared to hope that God would pardon it, for the sincerity your poor mother evinced in her long and lonely life of penitence, her studious and holy anxiety to benefit others, by her own fatal experience, and her desire to save you."

"Oh, aunt, how little has her deceit and concealment availed there! My own pride, my own ungovernable pride, remained uncorrected by the example of her piety, her benevolence, her zeal, her humility, never did, never would have effected in me the salutary change, the knowledge of her shame has done, the knowledge that very pride forced from your reluctant lips."

"But, aunt, again I ask, Who was the wretch who brought that shame upon her, upon me? Who was the monster I could almost curse?"

"One, my love, who has long since paid the penalty of his numerous crimes, by a self-inflicted death; to which he was actuated by the tortures of that intolerable remorse, which frequently drives the guilty to the commission of more desperate acts of turpitude still; rather, than to the repentance necessary to atone for those already committed."

"Then, my mother's was an assumed name?"

"It was."

"And—I then am nameless? O God!"

"Poor child! dear Mildred! you have mine, your mother's"—

"Never, aunt; never will I be called by it, put it to paper,—so help me"—

"Stop! Mildred Belmont, stop! oaths are rash, offensive in the sight of heaven."

"Well, aunt, well; answer only one more question, and then all will be finished for me. Answer, then, as if you stood before that heaven you are so fearful of offending. Does any one else—does Algernon Seymour—know that I am not the offspring of a virtuous marriage? Does he know?"

"He knows all."

"He! how long, aunt, how long?"

"Ever since your mother's death. She told him the whole

truth the last night he and I sat up with her, relying on the strength of his affection for you to keep it a secret, and committed you to his love."

"What! after betraying me herself so? No, no, no. Still I thank him for the faithfulness he has observed in keeping me in ignorance. It would have been my instant death to learn my disgrace from him.

"Now, aunt, now I must go to my own room."

"Do, my child, and may heaven support you!"

CHAPTER III.

MILDRED, as soon as she could recover from the grief and agitation into which the harrowing recital of her aunt had plunged her,—as soon, as she could assuage the choking and blinding tears, the memory of her still beloved, although most guilty mother, occasioned her,—as soon as she could compose her nerves for such an undertaking, commenced the act of expiation, which her aunt had so emphatically recommended; and, which, she felt herself, was most righteously due to the injured and unoffending Laura; by addressing to her, the following letter:

"DEAREST LAURA,

"I can almost picture your surprise at receiving a letter from me; and, one penned, too, in the style of tender and sincere repentance which characterizes the present; but I have much to crave your pardon for,—much to hope from your gentle, generous placability of temper, much to atone towards you,—much to appease towards myself, for the pride, the unjust, and oh! in my case, if you knew all, unbecoming pride, which I have on so many pointed occasions, cruelly evinced towards you. But, dear Laura,—but sweet, kind, amiable Laura, I am sincerely grieved for my conduct, believe me, I am; I am now humbled to the dust; and more fit for your pity, than resentment.

"If you will, then, forget and forgive the past,—if you will accept this unfeigned apology,—if you will still honour me with a continuance of your friendship; you will, in a great degree, reconcile me to myself,—restore my lost tranquility; and ensure the eternal gratitude and affection of my dear, *dear* Laura—your most miserable and most contrite friend,

"MILDRED."

Painful as it was to Mildred to write such a letter to a girl, whom she had so vilified and traduced; it was nothing to the anguish, the agony she experienced in addressing the following one, immediately afterwards, to her lover.

"As this will be the last time I shall ever have the confidence—the courage to write to you—the last time, there ever will be any necessity for me so to do—the last time, I could ever hope, that you would condescend to receive any such communication from so utterly degraded a being as myself,—I will pour out my whole soul to you, in the undisguised despair and horror which is now so fearfully oppressing it.

"Algernon! my aunt has *just* informed me of my mother's fatal history—told me that you are privy to it—that you have been ever since her death. Think, then, what must be my feelings, to learn at the same moment a mother's shame, my own shame, and your godlike forbearance and heroism. You! who have so often been the victim of my caprice—my happiness—my contempt. You who have so often been taunted by me, for the mediocrity of your birth; the lowliness of your origin. You! who have so often writhed beneath the arrogant contumely of her, who, fancying she could boast of a nobler descent, denied the love she really felt; and affected to marvel at your presumption in daring to aspire to one so immeasurably your superior. Oh! when I recal the past, when I have fortitude to reflect on it; I am ready to sink into the earth with sorrow and mortification at the idea, that at the instant, when I forgot all that was truly feminine, all that was truly womanly; basely and ignobly triumphing in the superb consciousness of that beauty, from whose trammels you could not escape; you knew the *truth*—you knew that at a word, you could have prostrated me at your feet, to cringe and weep, and supplicate for pity—for pardon,—begging for the very love I seemed so disdainful of; and, becoming in my turn, even more abject than I had endeavoured to render you: but, you forbore to breathe *that* word; you remained silent, nobly, grandly silent; and for so doing, accept my prayers, my gratitude, my devotions, and my *tears*.

"Now, that I know the truth; we part for ever. Never will I lay this cheek, burning with the blush of shame, on the bosom of such integrity, such worth. No, Algernon! no: although I love you sincerely, ardently, enduringly, I am unalterable in my resolve; only entreating you to believe, as indeed you *must*, that I never lent myself in the remotest way, to the prosecution of the awful deception I now denounce and repudiate, and which, no doubt, at first, imposed upon you, as it did also upon the rest of the world. No, Algernon, dear Algernon! I declare before heaven, that the heartrending news is scarcely one hour old

with me—scarcely one. My ears yet tingle with the searing information.

“Algernon, Algernon! I do not now confess my affection to lend a higher value to that which you are about to lose; not to deepen regret, not to enhance myself, not to rivet the chains of that remembrance which will now be so bitter, perhaps, to us both. No, my beloved, no; there was a time when I should have gloried in such coquetry; there was a time when I should have triumphed in such falsehood; there was a time when I should have been intoxicated with vanity at the effects of my skilful and tormenting artifice on you. But now—but now, I shudder at the faintest shadow of dissimulation, of subterfuge; for am I not the victim of a lie—an astounding, infamous, unpardonable lie—a horrible, atrocious lie? No, Algernon; it is to atone to you as much as I possibly can for the past that I own I love you, that I ever loved you, that I have in secret wept over the anguish my cruelty caused to the heart I prized so precious. Still, knowing as you, alas! do, only too well, from those very sufferings, how haughty, how unyielding is my natural disposition, you can judge what it must cost me to write to you thus, how impossible it will be for me ever to face you again, how impossible it will be for you ever to expect me so to do—that you would be even wanting in that generosity which has until now so eminently distinguished you, if you hoped or imagined we could ever meet after such a letter as this—that you would cancel and obliterate all the merit of your former reserve, your magnanimous silence, if you were indelicate enough to wish such an interview—that I could never pardon you for compelling me to blush before you; I, who am obliged to recollect that my erring mother is actually *dead*, to forgive her for bequeathing me the inheritance of shame which would, which does awaken that parching, withering glow. Farewell, then; farewell, then, for ever. Be happy; be happy in the belief that she who now resigns you will for ever pray for you, remember you, bear your image to the grave, as the only one love ever impressed on the heart, which anguish and humiliation have shattered to fragments, but only to multiply that adored image to infinity!”

Mildred was really so ill and depressed, from these conflicting emotions, that when dinner was announced, she begged earnestly to be excused descending to it. She also declined her aunt’s affectionate solicitations to come and sit with her as soon as it was over, alleging, as a reason for so doing, her wish to be alone, for the sake of rest. But in fact, she desired it to endeavour to collect her scattered thoughts, to think over her present position, to form her plans for the future, to study how

she should act under such new and trying circumstances, and to weep without restraint or observation over the past—the brilliant, the glorious *past*—when, full of daring pride, of absolute power, she ruled with exulting dominion over every one captive to her tyrannic sway.

Now, like all selfish and despotic persons, she concluded, judging from herself, that every eye would be averted from her, every heart and hand closed against her, and that universal triumph would signalize the downfall of a creature so arrogant and detestable.

The very concessions she had just made, and which she hoped would appease her reproachful conscience, had by no means the tranquillizing effects she anticipated, they being rather the hasty and inconsiderate consequences of an imperious impulsiveness, than the matured regrets of a subdued and truly humbled spirit.

Mildred's was not a character to reform all at once. It would have many relapses, many struggles, many combats, many, many good resolutions formed and broken, ere, becoming meek and lowly, it could feel that it was well to have been so visited, so punished, so suddenly precipitated from the dazzling and giddy eminence on which it was placed, not as a beacon-light, to guide, but as an *ignis-fatuus*, to mislead.

She was perfectly indifferent as to the effects of her letter on the simple-minded Laura, in comparison to the restless agony, the torture she experienced whilst thinking of that which it would produce on Algernon. She felt vitally interested in the effects her letter would produce on him.

She knew the generosity of his nature, the ardour of his affection, the persevering sanguineness of his disposition, the divine placability which influenced him. She knew that he would forgive, that he would supplicate, that he would not be dismissed nor discouraged. But she disdained to be pardoned by him; she resolved to be deaf to his intreaties; she revolted at the idea of being under so humiliating an obligation, of owing so oppressive a debt to one whom she had hitherto held in such barbarous subjection, one who might hereafter upbraid her with that very tyranny.

"No, no; never, never will I submit to the degradation, the mortification of being forced to quail before the man whose eyelids dropped instinctively at my presence! Never will I risk his reproach, never will I risk his upbraiding! But would he reproach? would he upbraid? Do I not know that he would not? do I not know that this very suspicion is the greatest act of injustice of all? O Algernon, Algernon! I am not worthy of you; I never shall be worthy of you; it is

in vain to hope it. I cannot, even by repentance, even by prayer, attain to the perfection you merit. Never did I feel myself so little, so base, so contracted in sentiment, so ignoble in thought, so mean of soul. You have had an escape, indeed, my beloved—a most fortunate escape. May providence enable you to consider it as such!”

She was at length interrupted in these painful reflections by the entrance of her aunt, accompanied by Laura, who had come personally to answer Mildred’s letter.

She arose with an unusual warmth of manner to receive them, to conceal her agitation, and the traces of the recent bitter tears she had been shedding.

Laura, without being able to utter a word, from emotion, opened her arms, and strained Mildred to her bosom with the most ardent affection, and then burst into a passionate flood of tears.

Mildred returned her embrace with unaffected ardour, and then burst into tears also.

“My dear child, my dear *children*,” exclaimed Mrs. Belmont, tenderly kissing them both, “now I am happy indeed. It is thus that I have ever prayed to behold you—united as sisters, sharing equally my affection, and dividing my anxious solicitude for the welfare of you both. I look forward to much comfort and tranquillity yet.

“You will be a mutual benefit to each other, your opposite characters being imperceptibly improved by unreserved intercourse, Mildred learning mildness and patience from my gentle Laura, and she, strength of mind from the now corrected fortitude of my dear niece.

“Only one thing is now wanting to complete my earthly task, which is the securing to her a guide and a friend to take my place when I am gone—one my pretty Laura will not be allowed the option of making—one no female can make—one which is alone found in an affectionate and sensible husband.”

“Oh, aunt, such a friend I shall never possess; such a guide will never direct my waywardness.”

“What! not Algernon?”

“No; I shall never see Algernon again. I have written to forbid his presence here, to decline his addresses for ever.”

“And do you suppose that he will obey you? Do you suppose he will resign the dearest hope of his life—rend from his heart the strong ties of a long-cherished affection, and quench the light that renders this world radiant for him, at your bidding? If he does, I have much mistaken his character, and shall not consider him worth lamenting. But he will not. Woman’s heart is prophetic in love, and mine predicts

that Algernon will be a perfect paragon of constancy and faithfulness in his."

"I hope not, aunt, I sincerely hope not; for, it will be of no avail. I am unalterable in my resolution."

"No doubt you think you are; no doubt you intend to be so. But what girl of eighteen was ever firm in such resolve, when assailed by the pleadings of the man who adores her, when assailed by the pleadings of her own heart?"

"But aunt, situated as I now am——"

"That only affords him a more signal opportunity of evincing the disinterestedness of his attachment, and you of your gratitude; and he will seize it with avidity."

"Never, aunt, never, after such a letter as I wrote."

"Well, this reply to that terrible letter must decide between us," replied Mrs. Belmont, drawing one from Algernon from her bosom, and offering it to her niece.

"Oh! aunt, I cannot read it; indeed I cannot. I am too agitated."

"And yet you *hope* that he will give you up. Ah! Mildred, Mildred, you *fear*, you dread lest he should."

"Oh! do, pray, read the letter, aunt, or give it to Laura."

"Well, well! you certainly are *very* indifferent about him. But I will take pity on your natural impatience, my love." Saying which, she broke the seal, and read the letter with considerable and varying emotion. It was as follows:—

"My dearest, sweetest Mildred,—You exaggerate your own faults towards me, and you equally exaggerate my merits towards yourself, and both excesses simply proceed from the exaltation of an over-excited imagination, suddenly depressed by a violent and unexpected shock. What have you ever done to me to call forth those bitter self-reproaches, to torture you now, in the midst of such real, deep, and heart-rending sorrow? Why, at such a moment, waste a thought on me at all? I declare solemnly I can remember nothing, my most precious love, save innumerable acts of kindness and condescension, the recollection of which even now overpowers me with gratitude and sorrow; gratitude, at your goodness in bestowing them on me; and sorrow, that I shall never be able to repay them. It is in vain that I endeavour to picture you, even from your own accusations, under any other form than as a ministering angel, smiling on my destiny. I only see in you, have ever only seen in you the loveliest, the most adorable of your sex, and only fear, have only feared, that I do not deserve to become the envied possessor of such an inestimable treasure, that I never could deserve to possess it. And what have I done to elicit your glowing, your overwhelming eulogiums? Concealed a

circumstance over which you had no controul ! Where is the man, possessed of the commonest humanity, who could have done less ? O Mildred, sweet Mildred, your encomiums almost mortify me ; I feel so little deserving of them. I feel that you have so little understood me, if for one instant you could suppose me capable of any other conduct—suppose that that conduct really merits the praises you so inconsiderately lavish upon it.

“ What ! if I said that, that very circumstance which you, alas ! consider as reflecting such disgrace on you, only elevated you in my estimation ; only rendered you an object of more holy veneration and tenderness ; a sublime commiseration blending with the love and admiration your beauty excited ?

“ What ! if I said, which I do before heaven, that my whole study has been to spare you the remotest shadow of pain ; that I have with tears, implored my God to spare my senses unto the grave ; lest, in the transports of a wild delirium, I might betray that which I would willingly have given my life to have had hidden from your knowledge for ever ? Then you might, in the prodigal bounty of your heart, have vouchsafed to thank me.

“ Oh, my beloved ! how is the life I would have consecrated to your repose, for ever now imbittered by the certainty, that you *do* know the fatal secret, and deny me the happiness of consoling you, of leading you to the forgetfulness of it ; or, the belief that the shame of a mother ought not, cannot reflect on her innocent, virtuous child. Yet do not think, do not imagine, that I shall, whilst I exist, cease to love you, cease to hope that you will still be mine ? No, Mildred, no ! only with death will I resign you, only with *death* ; for, rest assured a man never parts with an adored object, when conscious that his affection is reciprocated ;—no, sweetest, no,—had you really been desirous of submission, had you expected it, you should have concealed the blest assurance of your love. Why ! I loved you, worshipped you, breathed but for you, when I did not for an instant dare to hope for a return ; and now, and now when there is no reasonable obstacle to our happiness, I should be mad indeed to obey you. By confessing your attachment you have rendered yourself powerless of defence, and I shall come as a victor to bid you surrender !

“ I have a sweet surprise for you, I can come proudly to claim you now, for I have no longer the fear of being thought mercenary, (which heaven knows I never was,) having obtained an appointment which will enable me to offer you the elegance and luxury you have been so accustomed to, so deserving of. O ! Mildred ! what a glory for me to be rich enough to gratify your every wish ! what a glory for me, to feel that you will condes-

pend to share my wealth, to dispose of it all ; to lend it the sole value it ever can possess in my estimation, that of being useful to you. Oh ! how my heart throbs with delight at the idea of laying myself and fortune at your idolized feet !

"I shall instantly follow this letter, I dare not allow you time to deliberate, I *must* see you now that you are subdued. Now, that an angelic humility inclines your young heart to a divine pity. Mildred ! I cannot paint to you the sublime melting of my soul, when meditating on your beauty, softened as it now is by the tender shame of a mother's fault ; with a clear and transparent tear, welling up from the pure fountain of your artless bosom, to dim the brightness of the flashing eye, whose lustre was too dazzling for a timid love like mine to brave !

"Sweet, precious tear ! perhaps lingering in its fall, for me to kiss off !

"I do not know of what extravagance I may be guilty when we meet ; but pardon all, impute all to the intoxication, the rapture, the exquisite pleasure of knowing, at *last*, that I am not indifferent to you, that the devoted Algernon *is* loved by his angel Mildred."

"There !" exclaimed Mrs. Belmont, triumphantly, "there ! did I not say that he would be faithful ? Happy, happy Mildred !"

Mildred lifted up her tearful face from the bosom of her aunt, and shaking her head, sorrowfully, said, "Wretched, wretched Mildred, you mean aunt,—most, most wretched, to be obliged to lose such a man !"

"Lose him ! you have not lost him. I knew that he would prove himself the most generous, the most exalted of human beings. I *knew* he would, but I did not know until now, that my niece would ever merit such a husband. Nor would she, had she not been schooled by affliction, to appreciate the blessing now bestowed on her by a gracious Providence. Yes, now I am convinced that my Mildred is deserving of Algernon Seymour, that she will study his happiness, and strictly endeavour to realize to the full, the brilliant anticipations of his heart ; for, corrected as your own heart now is, my precious love, you will soon be conscious that it is not by caprice and tyranny, that a wife retains the affection her beauty awakened ; but, by that grace of mind, that chastened temper, that meek piety, which alone are derived from such a lesson as you have just learnt ; and which assure a man, that in the woman of his early selection, he has secured to himself a good beyond the evanescent charms which first captivated his imagination, for that more mature period of life, when passion, subsiding to esteem, demands the more solid attractions of a virtuous and well-organized

mind, to strengthen and render permanent the constancy too prone to vacillate from the decline of mere personal loveliness.

"Had you married in ignorance of that terrible event, which, by probing your heart to its inmost core, has purified it from the gangrenous festerings of inordinate vanity and self-love, so destructive of comfort, so pernicious to happiness; your union could only have been productive of mutual misery and sorrow; your arrogance testing his forbearance beyond the power of even Christian endurance, and driving his patience almost to the verge of despair. Algernon might, in a moment of desperation, have uttered that which *now* he will never breathe even in a dream, to harrow your feelings."

"O aunt! if I thought I could make him so happy! if I thought that I should never forget my present beneficial change of sentiments."

"You cannot, you never could, my dear Mildred; you never could,—the very presence of your husband, his every act of kindness, his every token of affection, would help to foster the perfect growth of the buds of reformation now germinating in your bosom; until they spread out like the palm of the desert, to afford him a shadow in the heat, a shelter in the storm."

"Oh! if I could think so, aunt; if I could believe so!"

"You will soon think so, soon believe so, for experience will force conviction on you. Oh! the day that gives you to his arms, will be the happiest of my life, the happiest of your own; for, to secure the protection of a man of worth and honour, who esteems as much as he loves, is the most glorious acquisition a woman can make on earth."

"Well! aunt, well! I leave all to you,—and to God."

IMPENDING SORROWS.

BY MRS. ABDY.

"Dark clouds hover o'er me—how oft in the distance
Have I gazed on those clouds with suspicion and fear;
Now vainly I seek for relief and assistance,
No hand can uphold me, no refuge is near.

I cease from the language of weak supplication,
No ear can it reach, and no heart can it warm;
I can but abide in defenceless prostration,
The force of the pelting and pitiless storm."

"Oh! thou, who thus yieldest thy soul to dejection,
Hath God lost the power his correction to stay?
Can He fill thee with fears, yet deny thee protection?
Can He smite thee, yet turn not his terrors away?

Pursue not thy selfish and idle repining,
Arouse thee—a moment thy lot may reverse;
And soon the soft sunbeams of peace may be shining
Through the light floating clouds as they break and disperse.

But even if thy prayers should be met with denial,
If thou may'st not the storm of affliction elude,
The Power who ordains thee to suffer the trial
Shall graciously bring it to work for thy good.

The flowers of the field gain new fragrance and beauty
When plentiful showers have refreshed the dry sod;
And sorrow may waken thy heart to its duty,
And lead it to give forth its incense to God."

THE INDUSTRIOUS SAVOYARD.

PART I.

HAVE you ever been at Nice? Mind! I do not mean Nice in Bithynia, where a synod of bishops so kindly settled what we were to believe and what not; neither do I mean that Nice which Alexander the Great built in India, and which perhaps you might be troubled to find if you went in search of it. No! the Nice I speak of is a very different place from either of these, and the first courier you meet, standing about in Sher-rard Street with his legs astride and blocking up the pavement, will tell you where it is. Neither, when I ask you,

If you have not been at Nice, do I intend to say, Have you been to it, or through it; but by *at* it I would understand that you have resided there at least for a winter season; for in no less a time can any one be said to have seen that delightful city in all its varied and agreeable aspects.

Nice is not a very large city, for it counts, perhaps, hardly more than fifteen thousand inhabitants: it is not a very regular city, for it has streets in all directions, except at right angles: but then it is a snug city, with its back fairly embedded in a valley overtopped with verdure, and its face open to the warm south. You may go far and near and not find its like. Then, to walk along its sea shore, and look on the rippling water, so clear that you may count the pebbles and the boulders one by one! And be not deceived; for there, where your eye sees to the bottom, shallow as it may appear, it is a full fathom deep: so, if you venture to bathe, walk cautiously in, lest the dazzling lens betray you to your destruction.

Reader, hast thou ever gazed, whilst waiting in a lady's drawing-room on a summer's day, where some careful housemaid had filled the grate with gaudy shavings fantastically arranged and of the brightest colours,—I say, hast thou ever gazed at the very pleasing effect which the gay confusion produces? especially when on the mantelpiece above are set in bright array sundry ornaments of Bohemian glass, vases and candelabra; and to the summit of the chimney rises a superb mirror, reflecting in vivid colours every object around. Well, this is but a faint image of the scenery which surrounds this favoured spot. Let me lead you to the fourth story of the lofty range of houses (palaces rather let me style them) built by that enterprising merchant, Ambrosio Tiranti. Now, cast your eyes on the splendid view which bursts on your bewildered senses. You are all amazement and wonder. I hear your exclamations of delight, and your rapture for a moment only finds utterance in broken sentences—how beautiful! how charming! Beneath your feet are gardens where roses, cactuses, aloes, and oleanders, intermingled with the richest verdure, at once tell you that you breathe the sweet atmosphere of a southern climate. A little beyond rise groves of olive trees, and among them painted villas, such as an English eye has only beheld on the scenes of a play-house. Farther off, umbrageous woods cover the dark avenues that lead, in devious windings, into the first deep valleys of the mountains covering the water courses, where, in the rainy season, rush down torrents which, but for the walled causeways keeping the impetuous stream in its bed, would inundate the plain, and sweep away the husbandman's labour. Here and there some castellated building, more magnificent and massive

than the neighbouring country houses, tells of former times, when Nice was a *comtat*, and its counts reigned the supreme lords of the adjoining country.

But now, carry your view to the farthest heights, and behold the spreading foot of the tall Alps, the recumbent giant whose vast stature spreads a barrier between the sea coast and the interior. Clouds hang suspended there; and if the cold blast, blowing from the north, sweeps over its top, it falls not on the valleys below, but, darting with the straightness of an arrow, strikes the open sea at a league's length from the shore; and the lounge, as he leans over the balcony of his saloon, wonders at the white surf which troubles the waves in the distance, nor can believe, until his telescope or some vessel under double reefed topsails has assured him of the fact, that the mariner in the offing is struggling with the gale, whilst the smoke of his cigar scarcely varies from the perpendicular.

And this observation calls me back to the city, if it is only to speak of the extreme elegance and commodiousness of the lodging houses, which certainly can vie with, if they do not excel, those of any other place of resort in southern climates. And, my fair countrywomen, whoever ye are who have done, or are doing the duties of housewives at home, before you denounce everything in Continental cities as inferior to the management of your own homes, be not angry if I pledge myself to your sleeping on a sweeter bed in Nice than you will do in your own house. You know that your best beds were bought, when you were married nine years ago, at Hollands: they could not be better! for the feathers were *Dantzic whites*, the wool of the mattresses Barbary, and the ticking of the finest quality. But then, from that very day to the present not one of them has been emptied and cleaned, and you know that your poor sister died on one of consumption, and your aunt Grace, from whom you have considerable expectations, and who has been for some years exceedingly infirm, has occupied at several periods another. Now, I need not tell you, that disease is no respecter of persons, and infirmity is alien to cleanliness. Can you therefore aver that, in these cases, some corporeal essences will not lodge themselves on such a nest of feathers and flocks? and will you fly in the face of our quarantine lawgivers, who, at the Lazarettoes, rip open very neatly packed bales of cotton and wool, and heartlessly condemn the poor porters to thrust their arms elbow deep into the fleeces, lest the contagion of plague and cholera should have hidden itself there?

This is the doctrine generally held by mistresses and maids throughout France and Italy, and, as the climax of all authorities in reference to my present proofs, at Nice: so that the

summer solstice has scarcely gone by, when, in every court-yard or spacious hall, may be seen the annual gutting of bed and mattress, and the athletic arms of men and women plying their trade in beating out every particle of dust and dirt with switches wielded with the dexterity of a Turkish kawass administering the bastinado: then may it be seen carried to the running brook to be washed, and spread on the beach or on the meadows to dry. The ticking is washed, the mattress remade, and the new comer feels assured that, so long as he tenants his new lodging, he will lay his head on a sweet pillow. There are lodging houses in Nice, which I could name, where cleanliness is carried to the utmost extent that even fastidiousness could require, and which calls for as much praise as the extreme neglect customary in English houses does for animadversion.

I therefore repeat my first question, whether you have ever been at Nice? If you have not, I advise you to repair there without delay. And do not think that you should lightly treat this urgency to hurry you there. You may fancy that Nice is accessible at all times—just when you like—next autumn at the long vacation, or after parliament is closed. But you are mistaken. There is the Var to cross, a nasty, ill-conditioned river, sometimes high and sometimes low, with a rickety bridge over it, that breaks down from the bumping it gets from loose spars of wood and long firs lopped of their branches, which swim away from their moorings when rains are heavy: and you might have to wait a day or two on its banks, even if you travelled with four horses and a courier. Moreover, the cholera may reappear in a short time, seeing that the devil is at work, and may not think that we have had enough amusement in Irish famine, city failures, and Spanish marriages; and then the bridge over the Var becomes a *cul-de-sac*, has “No Thoroughfare” written up in large letters, and you might as well attempt to cross it as to get access to F. M. the D. of W., or make Joseph Ady suppress his circulars. You may fancy, perhaps, that I am joking; but it is no such thing; and greater men than you and myself have been stopped on the middle plank of the bridge; for, let me remind you again, it is a wooden one. To such an accident does the village of Cannes owe its present renown; and, but for the cholera and the sentry on the Var bridge, my Lord Brougham and the late member for Westminster had probably never been neighbours, certainly, the former would never have built a chateau at Cannes.

It was late in the afternoon of a fine day in the autumn, about fifteen years ago, that his lordship reached the centre of the bridge which separates the territory of France from that of Charles Albert, king of Piedmont. The postillions made a

sudden stop, and his lordship, with a convulsive twist of that cartilaginous process or protuberance so powerfully susceptible of inflation in steeds of high mettle, thrust his head out of the window, and demanded what was the matter. A soldier in uniform informed him that his majesty the king had established a cordon of troops to prevent ingress to his dominions, because the cholera reigned at Toulon and Marseilles, which rendered him very desirous of keeping out so dangerous a visitor. The noble Lord Brougham thought such a caution was highly commendable; but having had satisfactory proofs that very morning of the non-existence of so dangerous a malady in his own person, he flattered himself that some exemption from the edict might be made in his favour (more especially as he was not at all desirous of being turned back into the very focus of the epidemic), and he accordingly sent for the officer of the guard, and begged him to suffer him to pass. This the officer refused; upon which Lord Brougham suggested the propriety of forwarding a messenger to the governor of Nice, acquainting him who he was, and signifying that they should "make way" for the Lord Chancellor of England. All was in vain; the governor (Mario's father, by the by) was as inexorable as the officer, and his lordship's carriage, now half way on the bridge, had to be drawn backwards until it reached terra firma, when his lordship made an excellent speech from the window to the assembled people in very good *patois*, and then gave orders to be taken to the nearest town where he could be comfortably lodged. It was in the "Strangers' Book" of that hotel, that some English traveller recorded these facts, and in verse, which I would willingly transcribe, did I not fear to be too prolix. I shall content myself, therefore, with merely copying the threats which his lordship very properly vented at the bridge foot against such uncalled-for disrespect, a passage where the author seems to have warmed himself into enthusiasm in his hero's cause: it runs as follows:—

'Twas there I met the peer, morose and glum,
Who just repulsed, had from the frontiers come.
Methinks I see him standing at the Var,
Exclaiming "Fellow! know'st thou who we are?
Go, tell thy master he shall pay most dear,
If he delays us but a moment here.
We are the Chancellor, Lord Brougham and Vaux,
And shall we tremble at a sentry-box?
We, who have called e'en Sugden's self a worm:—
We, who as pompous Sutton can affirm,
When Canning said we lied, across the floor

Walked in defiance almost to the door.
No ! if our benefactors we forget,
And treat Ben Smith as one we never met,
Or if we leave the Charities in tears,
(For such low work is troublesome to peers),
Insults on us shal. be in memory stored,
And we'll submit it to the Council Board.
Now, by our woolsack, 'tis a pretty thing !
This very night we'll write it to the King :
And on our wig may yellow Lambton spit,
If e'er Charles Albert hears the last of it."

Whether the cholera will again terrify the Sardinian monarch by a second formidable invasion, or create such another episode as the one narrated, it is not possible to decide ; but through all such difficulties, should health or pleasure induce you to venture from home for a season, be assured, at no place, for one or the other cause, can you so usefully pass your time as there. Hygæia, indeed, seems to have fixed her principal temple in Nice, although I am aware she has several in other favoured localities. But when you reflect on the advantages which the position of this city presents, it seems impossible not to give it the preference.

The physicians of the last century were accustomed to send consumptive patients to Montpellier and Marseilles for a mild climate. Experience, however, soon taught the sufferers and those who accompanied them, that there prevailed in the south of France a wind of frequent occurrence in the winter months, the chilling blasts of which more than counterbalanced the good effects of a warm sun ; and the vicissitudes of heat and cold, as the patient turned the corner of a street, or changed from the sunny to the shady side, were found to be so prejudicial to delicate invalids, that, although a few, sent by medical practitioners of the old school, repaired thither at the close of the Buonaparte war in 1815, it was soon found that more equable climates must be sought for, if the cure of incipient phthisis were really not an illusory hope. Succeeding invalids accordingly repaired to Hyères ; because, as orange trees flourished there in the open air, tubercles must necessarily be dissipated by its purifying properties. But it was discovered that the Mistral or cold wind from the gulph of Lyons reached this spot also, and it was found necessary to retreat before it, until, passing the Estarelle mountains, a chain which may be considered as the south-west spur of the Low Alps, the invalid found the calm, warm and genial spot which his tender frame had hitherto in vain sought for.

The bay of Nice is formed by two horns or projecting headlands, which, advancing far beyond the line of the intermediate and concave shore, produce a phenomenon rarely to be met with along a sea coast. Let the curious observer place himself on the terrace, or favourite promenade of the Nizards (so the inhabitants are called, or more properly, *Niçois*), and looking now towards the lighthouse of Villa Franca to the south-east, then towards Antibes to the south-west, he will behold the extraordinary appearance of ships coming in sight from the two opposite directions, with a cap full of wind blowing from directly opposite quarters. Watching them as they advance, he will observe that they both get becalmed little by little, until their sails flap loosely on the masts; and there they lie, unable to proceed any farther; when, at the close of day, the land breeze springs up, and each has disappeared before morning to its opposed destination. Here is the explanation. The Mistral, or north-west wind, blows very constantly over the Gulf of Lyons, and brings vessels on their course eastward, until they round the head-land jutting from the Estarel chain, between Frejus and Antibes, which has so completely intercepted its cold and always chilling blast, that a dead calm prevails inside of it. In the opposite gulf, which is that of Genoa, the east wind most often reigns. But when it has brought vessels as far as the headland of Villa Franca, it is stopped there, and becomes powerless. Midway between these two points stands Nice, and the sky overhead and in front, cloudless and calm, seems to say—Here the contending Eurus and Aquilo have met and have spent their force. The sweet South has lulled them into repose, and mortals have nothing to fear from their impetuous anger.

I mentioned the terrace a few lines back: this terrace deserves a passing notice. Facing the sea-side, in the very centre of the town, there is a row of arches of about a quarter of a mile in length, surmounted by a level roof, with a low parapet on either hand, where, by means of a compact cement of mortar and fine gravel, has been formed a walk, and where, several feet above the level of the beach, the Nizards, at the close of their hot days, resort to catch the sea-breeze. Benches at convenient intervals line its sides, and here may be seen the fashionable and unfashionable residents, mingling in a crowd, with very few signs of exclusive pride on one part, or servile respect on the other. It is the viaduct from one extremity of the city to the other, and might be happily imitated in some of our watering-places, or even in the metropolis, with most beneficial effects. Neither carts nor carriages, barrows nor baskets, impede the way. No cross-roads intersect it; no

shops collect knots of people to turn you out of your path ; no gutters run on it, no leaves fall, no mud collects. One and one only mark of cynicism (too common in foreign countries) defaces its surface—when, in the obscurity of the night, Cloacina allows her impure sacrifices to desecrate the hallowed ground.

But it is time I should hasten to my story, which is about a shopkeeper of the place, who, from the smallest beginnings, has risen to be a rich man. Yet I cannot help intreating the gentle reader to allow me to prolong these opening remarks, which, however desultory, may be, notwithstanding, interesting to some persons. I wish to have a word with him on the salubrity of the climate of Nice. For, he may have a daughter or a son, who from wearing their shoes or boots in wet weather, and disliking clogs, because they disfigured the symmetry of the foot, has caught a cold, which seems settling on the lungs. Or he may have a dear little boy, whom his foolish mother has enveloped in boas round his throat, every time he has gone out, and so sweated him under his chin and ears, that swollen glands have been the consequence. Poor, foolish mothers! why will they not look at the Bluecoat boys, and gather hints from their blooming looks? I will venture to say there is not a scrofulous boy in all the establishment; and I will venture still further to assert that more mischief has been done by smothering and casing the necks of children in furs and flannels than ignorant nurses, prejudiced governesses, and anxious mammas ever dreamed of. Is it possible that the pores, excited to increased perspiration by exercise under such hot covering, should not feel spasmodic contraction when re-exposed to the effects of the air (no matter whether in doors or not), on removing them. And then the current of blood and lymph, thrown back on the glands, creates a perturbation there. A thickening ensues; then follows enlargement—and who shall answer for the consequences? Perhaps some dispeptic elderly gentleman, a martyr to hypochondriacism, or some young wife, whose prayers for offspring have not been heard, might sigh for a change of air, diet, and scenery. For all these Nice is a paradise; for all such ills Nice has a cure, and I will tell you how.

Nice is situate, as you have already been told, on the sea shore, on a clear shingle. It stands in a valley, which extends a mile or two behind to the foot of the mountains, which rise in progressive slopes, dotted with olive groves and country villas. Through the valley, and dividing the city in two, runs the Pallioni, the bed of a torrent which is mostly dry in summer, and runs wildly and fearfully during the heavy rains, but

is kept within its banks by dykes above the town and walls within it. Over the Pallioni, a handsome stone bridge leads to the quarter called the Croix de Martre, built on an alluvial soil, and abounding in elegant houses and edifices, constructed for lodging families of distinction and humbler individuals. Beautiful gardens variegate the localities, and many of the villas which face the continuation of the sea shore are structures which would ornament the finest capitals in Europe. The direct road over the bridge leads towards the Var, the river which separates Piedmont from France, and which is distant one league; and this road is a few hundred yards inland, and runs parallel with the shore. Plump in the middle of the city and of the valley, but on the opposite side to the Croix de Martre, and overhanging the harbour, a mount of a conical shape uprears itself to the height of some three or four hundred feet, where once stood a castle, the ruins of which still form a picturesque object. The sides and summit of the Castle Hill, as it is called, are laid out in winding walks, and from it the eye takes in a wide extent of sea and land prospect.

On the west, north-west, and north of this hill are found the most inhabited streets, where is the governor's palace, the senate-house, the principal shops, the markets, barracks, and a fine square—the Piazza; as also the Corso, where are the coffee-houses, billiard rooms, and eating houses. Continuing from the Corso on the south side of the hill, a road, blasted out of the rock which forms the Castle Hill, and forming an angle where the low swell of the waves often makes a report like distant thunder, leads round to the harbour an inlet formed by a mole, where, in an oblong basin, vessels of a hundred or two hundred tons burthen are moored securely. A marble statue of Ferdinand Alberto, or Leopoldo, or Carlo Alberto (for I forget the name; but he was a good king, and a father of his country, of which anybody may be convinced, if he only reads the inscription) is placed near the mole, pointing like Canute to the waves, and saying—Thus far shall ye advance, but no farther. A little stream, called by some poetic name, runs through the valley into the harbour, and some of its under rills, finding their way to the surface just near the foot of the massive quays which girt the port, have been confined in stone basins, and are in repute for their excellence. Idle ladies may go in their carriages and carry home jars of it for their private beverage, and hydrohygænic patients may take their tumblers there, and not regret the springs of Malvern. On the opposite side of the harbour is the embryo of an Alp. The beach ceases, and the shore is rocky and broken into

fantastic indentations. Following the line of coast, the land view terminates by the light-house.

At the back of the town, to the north-east in the course of the descent of the Pallioni, and overlooking its bed, is a beautiful and verdant hill, on which the ancient city of Cimies, of Roman origin, once stood. An amphitheatre and a ruined temple attest its former consideration. From its site, so distant from the sea, we may conclude that piratical incursions were more frequent, and predatory descents on the coast more dreaded in early times than now. Places were only safe by distance, or from their inaccessible position; and the appearance of what is called the old town of Nice, as of Hyères, Porto Venere, and other towns on the Riva, clearly shows that narrow streets, probably barricadoed by gates, were the only safeguards from the corsairs, who, for the sake of plunder, infested the Mediterranean in the middle ages and in the glorious days of the Knights of St. John.

Thus, then, it will be seen, that Nice is provided with every requisite for a sick man's abode in a warm climate; which words remind me, that nothing has yet been mentioned of the thermometrical scale of heat. From careful observations, made during two or three years with considerable attention, it may be averred that Fahrenheit's thermometer seldom falls to the freezing point during winter, except for three or four days about Christmas, and seldom rises above eighty degrees during summer or autumn. The sun's heat is considerably less than the occasional heat in Paris or London; but then, Nice is said to be hotter because, from a long continued dryness, the soil reflects more rays than it absorbs: yet it is peculiarly healthy through the summer and autumnal months; and those who fly from it to Geneva or Lucca baths, or elsewhere, with no other view than to shun positive heat, are greatly mistaken. No southern position on this side of the Mediterranean, is free from the chilling effects of March winds: Nice has its share, but less than Pisa, Leghorn or Rome. No person can safely throw aside his winter clothing earlier in these southern latitudes than in London and Paris. Look at the natives, men and women, and they will be seen with their cloaks on their backs or on their arms, (ready for use) until the first of May, and the elderly persons much later. Imitate their example, and no ill consequences need be apprehended: but gentlemen who are in too great haste to resume their white pantaloons, or ladies who delight in flounced muslin dresses, and flimsy Barège scarfs, would soon find reason to repent of their perversity. It is towards the close of the day that these precautions are eminently salutary; for the descent of cold moisture, condensed by the cessation of the sun's rays,

which held it floating in vapour, creates a positive chill, that affects invalids most sensibly, and may soon drive people in health into the doctor's hands.

Nice affords lodging-houses for every description of residents; and, in the choice of a dwelling during a winter season, there is one rule never to be swerved from, under whatever temptation the landlady may disguise it: this is, to choose rooms for sleeping and sitting facing the south. Elegant window curtains, rich carpets, splendid furniture—all must be rejected for this one essential advantage, and a brick floored room uncarpetted, when facing the south, is preferable to a carpetted one with a northern aspect.

It will be no small comfort to a resident, that he can choose for himself, according to the nature of his ailments, and the advice of some physician of judgment, either a hilly and rural position on the heights of Ceiniès, or a moist and suburban one in the Croix de Martre, or a marine site on the sea shore, where reigns an almost perpetual coolness, if the management of blinds and the application of subdued light is sufficiently understood:

Quale ferè sylvæ lumen habere solent.

Finally, there are large and airy streets, where the delicate beau and his fastidious dame may reach the public promenades, the theatre, the jewellers, or the perfumers, without stepping beyond the precincts of a very clean pavement.

I trust that I am broaching no new or offensive opinion to my countrymen, when I maintain that existence is more pleasurable in a city abroad than at home. I have witnessed on the continent the remarkable trio of a pensioned judge, a benefited clergyman, and a practising physician, all three English, playing a game of billiards together; yet were they all good men, and fathers of families, all of moral and respected character. How often, when, in an evening of a winter's day, I have made one of the assemblage on the benches of a billiard room in a coffee-house, or some Italian corso, have I admired the cheerful humour that animated the party, composed of nobles and citizens, seated amicably side by side, drinking a cup of coffee, a glass of punch, or sipping an ice cream, not one of which refreshments would cost more than twopence, and looking on with interest at a game played by a couple of amateurs, whose stake was seldom more than the price of the tables! Is there so much in a name, that our sainted legislators would be ever interfering with games of skill, like the admirable one of billiards, so as to render our presence at them a shame and an opprobrium? Away with their hypocritical cant; for it is hardly possible to devise a more useful exercise in hot and wet weather

than the change of limb and motion that a well handled cue necessitates. Every muscle is put gently into action ; the chest is expanded, the limbs are extended, the back is bent : a pleasant excitement agitates the frame, and the pores insensibly give evidence how much the circulation has been promoted, to the advancement of health, appetite, digestion and sleep. Were mine the office of Odile, not a hospital should be built without a billiard table—not a church without a bath. I would multiply Fives Courts, Tennis Courts, and skittle grounds, and remove them from the contact of those venders of spirituous liquors, whose contamination it is, and to which the poor are driven by oppressive laws, that renders our population so debased by drunkenness and so unlike the soberer people of other countries, who have cheap diversions to resort to.

Sea bathing is a favourite amusement of the residents at Nice. Tents are fixed on the shore, and from them ladies emerge habited in a black merino vest and trousers, all in one piece, and buttoned behind as far down as the waist. In this attire they stand fearlessly without the tent, pause as they look on the salt water, into which they step at first with the timidity natural to their sex, until, acquiring courage, they swim, dive, and float, with the expertness of hackneyed bathers, and are neither disturbed nor distressed by the approach of lookers on. One family, connected by blood with the oldest names of France, and itself illustrious among the Sardinian nobles, was accustomed to go from morning to morning through the summer, (a father, a mother, three daughters, and an aunt,) and bathe together on the open sea shore. They might be seen alighting from their carriage, (the ladies often without stockings,) and, when habited under separate tents in their proper dress, coming forth, and mixing in innocent gambols in the sea—swimming to considerable distances and back again, plunging from a plank over the stern of a boat, and sometimes in turn floating on the back, whilst alternately the father and the daughters would dive under each other, and come up on the other side, like tritons and nymphs sporting in their native element. A swimming master had acquired considerable celebrity in teaching these, and many other ladies, and it may not be out of place to relate an incident or two connected with his pursuits.

Xavier was an old sailor, who from his familiarity with the sea, and his brawny powers in buffeting with the waves, had acquired the name of *Xavier le Plongeur*. He could remain a considerable time under water, and often, when vessels had an unknown leakage, or were injured in their hulls, or had their anchors foul, Xavier was employed to dive down and examine the damage ; which in the transparent waters of the Mediter-

anean, and in an undisturbed basin like the harbour of Nice, was, as far as seeing through an aqueous medium goes, not difficult; but in respect to holding the breath long enough not quite so easy; for on returning to the surface, after poking about the bottom of the harbour for more than two-thirds of a minute, his cheeks sometimes looked most disproportionably puffed out, and his eyes strangely bewildered. However, as nobody was cleverer than himself at his craft, Xavier by degrees was created government diver, and had moreover a decent stone dwelling two stories high, overlooking the mole assigned to him. Installed here, enjoying the privilege of fishing, known as a first-rate swimming master, and blessed with an industrious wife and two strapping daughters, who could row a boat, put down a lobster pot, swim, and trim a sail almost as well as himself, Xavier might be said to have attained the height of his ambition. Moreover, when the troops in garrison were marched down to the sea side to bathe, some three or four companies at a time, Xavier had the duty assigned him of lying on his oars in his boat in face of the party to save the drowning, and drive in the over venturesome stragglers. Then, if some luckless wight of the town population did by accident drown himself, or was overtaken by cramp far from the shore, and sank to rise no more, Xavier was the man to dive for his lost body, and bring it to the strand for inquest.

Adjoining to Xavier's house was the prison, where the galley slaves were confined:—for Nice has its galley slaves, dressed in red jackets, who are scavengers for the streets, and are chained two by two; but why *red* jackets should be chosen to mark convicted rogues I never could learn. There was a chaplain, who said mass to the slaves; and whether his own house was not so good as Xavier's, or was not so pleasantly situated, or that he paid for it and Xavier stood rent free, I know not; but he coveted Xavier's stone house, and took steps by memorializing the men in power, to turn Xavier out and take his place.

Priests have much influence in Catholic countries. They are not justices of the peace, as they are with us, nor have they livings of £1,000 a-year, nor have they wives and daughters, but they have for all that considerable weight, and Xavier was told that he must give up his tenement. Xavier, however, was a sly fellow, though no lawyer; so he drew up a memorial and presented it to the governor. In it he said that he was often called to dive down to vessels' bottoms, and it was a great convenience to him to have a place near the quay, where he could go and return in his diving dress without shocking the susceptibility of prudish persons, who would otherwise behold him in nothing but his drawers. He alleged that as swimming master,

it was necessary to have his store of tents and bathing dresses within reach of the shore; otherwise how were his daughters to carry them backward and forward. He said it was better that the chaplain should reside within the precincts of the prison, if it were only by his immediate presence to prevent profane swearing, obscenity, etc. He urged the necessity of his living near the sea shore; otherwise how, if called to save a man from imminent drowning, could he reach him in time. But this last argument was Xavier's stumbling block; for the cunning chaplain seizing on the drowning man, averred that it was of more consequence that a soul should be saved than a life, and that therefore it was more material for him, the priest, to be at hand to administer the last Christian rites, and receive the dying man's accents, than for Xavier to lend a helping hand to extricate him from a watery grave. So the priest gained the day as to the first and second floor of the house, but Xavier would not resign the attics, and there, if yet alive, he may still be seen, with a hammock slung for himself, one for his wife, and with cots of his own making for his daughters; whilst nets, oars, masts and tackles hang across the rafters, and a cask of wine, on which young Bacchus might stride with honour, fills up the embrasure of one of the garret windows.

Xavier had a well known Englishman for a pupil, who came every morning from his lodgings to take his lesson, and paid sixty francs a month; so he was a desirable pupil, and Xavier engaged to make a swimmer of him in no time at all. There was, however, one very serious obstacle, which inconvenienced greatly both the teacher and the tyro. The Englishman did not understand a word of French or Italian, and beyond these two tongues was an unknown latitude to Xavier. It so happened that there was an elderly English gentleman, some seasons a resident at Nice, and who, from his love of boating, had frequently employed Xavier, and was well known to him. To him Xavier went, and with a woful face explained the difficulty under which he laboured, declaring it was impossible to get his pupil on, because they could not understand each other.

"Now," said Xavier, "the gentleman has a very good notion of swimming; he strikes out very well, keeps his fingers together, flattens his hand horizontally, does not dip his elbows, and draws them back well to his sides. Then he gathers his knees into his stomach, and does all I tell him, so he swam full half a boat's length this very morning; but the mischief is, he will not hold up his head; and, although I pull up his chin, and make signs with my own head until I have almost dislocated it, he never will understand what I mean, and down goes his face into the water, and then there is a gurgling at the mouth, and the man

would be drowned to a certainty if I were not by to catch him. Now what I wish to know is how I am to say to him in English that he should keep his head as high as he can, and I will thank you very much if you will tell me."

"Oh!" replied the gentleman, "is that all? I can very soon teach you that. Whenever you see his head sinking, you have nothing to do but to cry out "Heads up, Pompey! heads up, Pompey! which is, you know, the same as *alta la testa, alta la testa*. Now repeat it after me." So Xavier repeated it about a score of times, and when he thought he had got it by heart, returned home, saying all the way to himself, "Heads up, Pompey."

The next morning the Englishman came, undressed himself, and began taking his lesson. As soon as the first impression of the cold water was over, and he had dipped his head, rubbed his arms and face, and braced himself up as it were for the business, he sought a convenient depth, and then, sprawling like a beginner for a few strokes, began to struggle, and puff, and puff and struggle. Now was the moment for Xavier to make play with his new acquired phrase; so he exclaimed, in a sort of tone as much as to say, now you shall hear,—"Heads up, Pompey, heads up Pompey;" upon hearing which words, the astonished Englishman, finding the ground with his feet, and feeling that he was not out of his depth, indignant, we may suppose, at being compared to a dog, turned towards Xavier (who had hastened, as was his wont, to assist him,) and dealt him a blow with all his force in the face, then making for the shore, retreated to his tent, changed his dress in an agitated manner, and muttering execrations in English, hurried off to his home.

Luckily the efforts which the Englishman had made in the water had for the time so far weakened him that the blow fell comparatively harmless on the diver; but Xavier, who was a man not to be beaten with impunity, in the first heat of the insult he had received, would have perhaps sought for revenge. However, the thought of his sixty francs, and his good sense, which at once showed him there must be something in the words more than he was aware of, kept him quiet; and he turned his anger in another channel. So, resolving on seeking reparation from the elderly gentleman, he hastened to him, related what had happened, and said, "Now, signor, I ask of you what was the meaning of those words you taught me. They have been the cause of my receiving a blow, a dishonour to my name and family; they will probably bring on me the loss of sixty francs a month; and, if some satisfactory explanation is not given, they may urge me to wipe out in the Englishman's blood, or in yours,

the disgrace which no Italian puts up with ; and then they will have driven me to fly my country, too.

The elderly gentleman found that his joke was likely to be productive of serious consequences ; so he immediately bethought himself how he could best apply balm to Xavier's wound, and, sitting down, wrote a letter to the Englishman, giving him the explanation of the joke, and expressing a hope that, if he still felt any anger about it, he would divert it from Xavier on himself. The Englishman took the matter in good part, restored Xavier to favour, held his head up always after, and, I dare say, is now a first-rate swimmer.

PART II.

IN the narrow street at the back of the Governor's house, or at the front (for it has, like fashionable ladies, two façades, either of which may pass as a before or a behind) stands a *quincallier's* shop, kept by one Carlo Nolfi. A quincallier, in such a town as Nice, may be said to deal in almost every thing ; that is, if you want any article which you imagine is not to be found at the tailor's, shoemaker's, draper's, currier's, cabinet-maker's, or tallow-chandler's, you would go to Nolfi's for it, and there, as sure as a gun, would it be,—old, perhaps, or rusty, or decayed, or dusty,—but no matter, the quincallier has it. Thus, supposing you have a particular wish for a red Wedgwood tea-pot, or a pair of green spectacles, or a china jordan, or a Mercator's projector, or a stay-lace, or a jelly-mould, or an envelope case, or an Allison's piano, or a patent aerated water bottle, or some best Bath note paper, or a Mordan pen,—whatever you require he professes to keep, and will sell you a bargain.

He is now a comfortable man, rich as anybody in his street (and there are some good shops in it), and on Sundays dresses in full black, goes to twelve o'clock mass, and gets a bow from the commandant and the governor. He likewise takes his afternoon cup of coffee at the Café Royal, having for many years been an *habitué* of the Café Frederic, until his increasing customers seemed to intimate that he should quit it as somewhat beneath him, and frequent the benches of the better classes.

Charles Nolfi began the world with a pedlar's basket. Born in the mountains in the Milanese territory, he was turned out when twelve years old to seek his fortune, with tapes, stay-laces,

and Aix-la-Chapelle needles. In those days, very good needles were made at Aix-la-Chapelle, and so may be the case still; but not so many are sold now as then, seeing that Aix-la-Chapelle owned Buonaparte for its master and France for its country. But, since the place was made over to Prussia, a custom-house bars their importation into France, and many a fine building, once thronged with industrious workmen, is now falling to ruin. It is a perilous trade is needle-making; and, what with the milliner girls who use them, and die of consumption and marasmus before they are thirty, and the workmen who make them, and never live over five-and-forty, it must be said that a needle is a formidable weapon. I never look on one without feeling a shiver all over me. Stitch! stitch!—shirt and mantle—dress and *douillette*—there they are, so many shrouds for the miserable creatures who manufacture them. People may say what they like of the Bushmen and their wives, dressed in skins and unhemmed clouts; but, for my part, humanity derives more pleasure from their contemplation than it does from a corazza shirt, or the most superb court-dress that ever figured at Queen Victoria's drawing-room. After all, Bushmen's wives are not to be sneezed at, however fine misses might be shocked at their scanty covering and bare legs. Are the inmates of Three Tons Court, St. George's in the West, half so well or so decently clad? And are not warm skins something better than dirty rags, cast-off bonnets, and naked infants suckling the chill bosoms of a wretched creature who never felt any warmth but that of gin and a public-house fire?

Nolfi was a Savoyard boy; his jacket and breeches were of the coarsest woollen, and his legs were cased in felt, with no protection to his tender feet but the roughest shoes, hobnailed like a miser's door. But he had fine black sparkling eyes, a good row of teeth, and a complexion which, if brown, was smooth. He was honest, too, and industrious, contented with a crust of bread and the offals of people's tables; so that he soon increased his stock in trade with a thermometer or two, some spectacles, and paper telescopes.

He was about twenty-five years of age when, in his perambulations from place to place, he crossed the Col de Tende, and came down to Nice. The war was over, and a few families had begun to frequent the place in search of health. He found that his box was insufficient to supply the demand made on his stock in trade by gentlemen's valets, who went to the pit of the opera for five-pence to see the prima donna, and ladies' maids, who liked to have a spyglass, to look from the chamber windows facing the sea on the bathers. He took counsel with another pedlar, whom he met, and had known before, and they resolved

to open a shop in partnership. Nolfi had two hundred francs, and his associate had two hundred and fifty. With this small sum they hired a slip which fronted the street, paid six months' rent in advance, as is the good custom of these southern climes, and stocked it with such wares as they thought most saleable. The experiment succeeded. It succeeded, too, beyond their most sanguine hopes; and the wants of their customers guided them in the assortment of their goods.

In those early days of lodging-letting there were a few houses only to accommodate the visitors, and these were but badly furnished. A few cups and saucers, hardly a tea-pot or a tea-kettle, pie-dishes for hand-basins, no foot-pans, brass candlesticks, and oftener tin ones, no toasting-forks, no snuffers, no carpets, made it requisite for every family to spend much for their own accommodation, just to render their apartments comfortable. Carpets, by degrees, came into use, foot-pans were inquired for, lamps and candelabra were wanted, and Nolfi and his partner had enough to do to supply these increasing demands. By degrees their views enlarged, and it was thought that there was an opening for both, each to take a separate branch of business. Accordingly, a dissolution of partnership took place, and Nolfi opened a quincallier's shop, more splendid than Nice hitherto could boast of; and the unusual exhibition of culinary utensils, glass, china, walking-sticks, fishing-rods, guns and pistols, locks, brass and lackered wares, was a matter of pride, envy, and conversation for the town during full nine days.

An incident or two, however, came to disturb the even current of Nolfi's career. It has been mentioned that he sold pistols and fowling pieces, a very innocent traffic in quiet countries, but not altogether free from danger in disturbed governments. Piedmont had had the advantage of some insurrectional movements, caused by the dissemination of what are called French principles; a very convenient expression, which, like neuralgic complaints in nosology, and æsthetic doctrines in modern *feuilletonists*, means a great many things. Thus, mamma advises her daughter not to read Paul de Kock, because he is full of French principles; clergymen set their faces against a tour on the continent, because a youth may imbibe French principles; and Piedmont refuses the admission of the National newspaper, because it fears the spread of French principles. These insurrections had made the Sardinian government very careful into whose hands fire arms should be trusted, and as it could not proceed to the length of interdicting their use altogether, it was expected they might be rendered somewhat inoperative, if such a measure were prescribed for the bore of every gun, sold as a fowling piece, as might prevent its being

used with the musket balls of the military. To this end no gun was to be kept for sale, the bore of which exceeded a certain calibre. But as sportsmen are remarkable for liking to do what they are warned not to do, and will trespass on preserves, it so happened that Nolfi could sell prohibited guns more readily than others, and therefore supplied them, as he thought, to safe and discreet customers. I will not say that he actually was a *carbonaro*, and meditated bloodshed or revolt; but so he did, and as frequently happens in similar cases, was informed against, was arrested, imprisoned, tried, and condemned to two years residence within side the prison walls. But Nolfi had some few crowns he could call his own, and as these too can be disseminated as well as French principles, his incarceration was changed to two years' arrest in his own house, which meant that he might stand behind the counter all day, and sneak out in the dark to a neighbour's house, provided he did not carry a lantern to show who he was.

Another incident was, as some would say, of a more serious character still. He had been married some years, and was now father of two daughters and two sons, when his wife took it into her head to elope with a Frenchman, and carry away her eldest boy with her. Nolfi's philosophy, however, was entirely proof against this equivocal calamity. He rather liked to converse on the subject, and declared that, all things considered, with the exception of winter nights when two in a bed kept each other warm, he saw no reason to regret her loss; for his eldest daughter was now old enough to attend to the house, and his wife had grown over religious of late, and was always wanting the *padre's* advice and consolation.

Nolfi's shop was a place of rendezvous for two or three gentlemen in the evening, who would sit and converse with him when not busy with his customers. He had a small back room also, into which an occasional mysterious visitor would be ushered,—a lady veiled, or a maid servant with a bundle like a shawl wrapped up, or a silver coffee pot or some valuables, and then you might conclude that something was to be sold or pawned, as a proof of which he would from time to time produce a diamond pin, or ear-rings, and pass them in review, as if to see what value people would set upon them. One of the visitors who frequented his shop to while away the time was a baron. Sometimes, when he had just left it, and had wished good night with all the formality of a *gentilhomme of la vieille cour*, Nolfi would say—ah! there he goes home to his salad and cheese parings. Poor man! he has but 860 francs a-year to live on, and his old house—three of them! he and his wife and daughter! But then he is Mons. Le Baron, and one must be

civil to him; he is of an old family, fallen into decay. I very often help him when he is a little behind hand, and lend him fifty or a hundred francs to keep him from distress, and he always pays me very punctually. You Englishmen, millionaires as you all are, don't know what frugality is. You think yourselves mightily bad off if you have not a joint at table every day. Why, that man does not eat so much meat in a year, as you do in a week. But then, you know, he has the *entrée* at the balls at government, which our richest merchants have not. Ah! I often think what some of your rich families would say if the same rigour were used towards them as towards us. Did you see the three young ladies and their father, who, they say, were the belles of new year's day *soirée* at the governor's. Their father, I am informed, is a coach-maker. There they were! The aide-de camps escorting them from room to room, and the governor's wife striving to amuse them. Why! if they had but been born among us, they would never have seen the inside of that house, farther than the *remise*, at least, I can assure you. However, we all live by you, and our town has been built principally with English money; so we ought to do what we can to entertain you.

The conversation one evening turned on Paganini, and having learnt that the celebrated violinist had died within two doors of where we were sitting, I gathered a few particulars respecting him, which may be new to the reader.

Paganini returned from his last campaign in England, with the seeds of consumption. He was, it is said, a native of Genoa; and, as the air of that city is little inferior in salubrity and warmth to the climate of Nice, I am not aware why he preferred the latter place: but there he took lodgings in a second floor in a narrow street, and a noisy one too, and put himself under the hands of a physician to endeavour to recruit his health. At first he amused himself with some amateurs of his acquaintance, more especially with Count Césole, a performer hardly inferior to himself, in playing on his fiddle; but his disease made rapid inroads on his constitution, his vigour failed him, and he was obliged to abandon this the chief solace of his days. At last he died, and bequeathed one of his favourite violins to the Count, his friend, as the most valuable legacy he could leave him. His fortune went to a pretty, black haired, black eyed, sallow boy of about fourteen years of age, his reputed son.

Paganini was a man of too much note in the world to be suffered to die quietly in his bed. He had, in the course of a few years, amassed an immense fortune (for Italy, that is) on the sole stock in trade of five catgut strings, a few resined

horsehairs, and his five bony fingers. All his bags were soon to elude his grasp, and there were not wanting many who would have been pleased to have had some of the pickings. Musicians are in general reputed to be a not very saving race; Paganini was an exception to the rule: he never threw away a penny. As an example of his parsimony, we may cite the following anecdote.

He had advertised a concert at the theatre at Nice, and when the hour for opening the doors arrived, he went into a barber's shop directly opposite, where he intended to get shaved and to wash his hands and face at the same time, thus saving soap at home. These three operations over, he threw down his *sei soldi* (his three-pence) and was going out. "Signior maestro," said the barber, you are going to play to-night to a thousand people, who each pay you five francs; surely you cannot mean to offer me six sous?" Paganini did mean it, and would not give a farthing more. So the barber threw the six sous into the street, and Paganini, nothing agitated, crossed the road, entered by the private door, advanced on the stage, and executed some of those brilliant feats of legerdemain which drew down the applause and admiration of Europe upon him.

When Paganini was known to be near his end, it was intimated to him, that, like a good Catholic, he should call in the aid of a religious adviser, in order to prepare his passage for another world. This was never done gratis. Nobody is ferried across the Styx without paying for it; and Paganini had not made up his mind quite contentedly whether the priests were entitled to what they generally demand on such occasions. Moreover, the terms were not to his liking. He was told that he must go through the ordeal of confession; and Paganini recollected that the heathens never did so of old, and the protestants are not accustomed to do so in the present day (except such men as Tawell, who by some peculiar chemical procedure can enlighten the acolytes in poisoning), so he hesitated most provokingly to accede to the proposal. He was willing, he said, to write the particulars of his sinful life on a slate, which, after being read by the priest, he should take the liberty of sponging out; or he would confess them orally in the usual way.

But Paganini had been accused of speaking lightly of the faith to which he belonged: he had ridiculed monks, laughed at priests, spoken disrespectfully of Monsignore the bishop, and it was desirable to have a written acknowledgment of his faults, and an humble appeal for forgiveness to heaven through the only channel where, according to the Roman doctrines, it is possible to obtain it. The salvo of the slate was inadmissible, and Paganini could not make up his mind to paper. The con-

ferences were long and maintained on both sides with much argumentation and pertinacity, when, one morning, Paganini, whilst swallowing his breakfast, was seized with a fit of coughing in which the phlegm would not come up, and expired of suffocation.

His long illness had reduced him to a mere skeleton. He was always a spectre, but emaciation had made him a bag of bones, fit to hang in a doctor's closet. His body was embalmed according to the *procès Ganai*, by arsenical injection, and preparations were made for his funeral. Not so fast, my good sirs ! It was soon whispered about that the church, in consideration of his having expired without the last offices of religion, refused burial to the corpse in holy ground. This is no trifle in a Catholic country. It might have been very well for Scipio Africanus or Herodius Atticus, to be entombed by the road side, followed by their relatives and freedmen ; but they went to the Elysian fields, to Hades, to Plutonian countries, and had not received the light which has been since shed to shew us where the blessed are to rest. Accordingly a negotiation was set on foot between his executors and the bishop, and terms were proposed and rejected, the church on one hand grounding the most unwarrantable pretensions on the supposed terrors of friends and relations, lest the rites of burial should be refused to the corpse ; and the friends of the deceased boldly holding fast the funds which they had to direct for the good of the living, and professing much uncertainty how far a sacred waste was even justifiable for the salvation of the soul of the deceased violin player.

In the mean time, the corpse kept well ; it showed no signs of putrefaction or even visible change ; it lay for some days in the chamber where, when animated, Paganini had resided ; but as there seemed no probability of a speedy solution of the difficulties which the clergy had started, the physician, who had embalmed the body, had it removed to Vella France, a small maritime town, about one mile from Nice, and there it was deposited in the cellar of a house, where the writer of these remarks was invited to see it in May, 1844, when visiting Nice. What since has become of it, whether entombed or still above ground, the writer is unable to say ; but Paganini's stern resistance to the menaces and intimidation generally practised towards dying men by designing churchmen of the Romanist persuasion, it was thought, should not be altogether blotted out of men's memories, seeing that every act of courage in such trying moments, is a triumph of reason over priestcraft.

Such were the anecdotes which from time to time were to be heard in Signior Carlo's shop. I left the country when his ap-

pearance promised a good old age, and the length of this article warns me I must leave him to my readers, with a request, that, if their peregrinations lead them along the Riviere de Gênes, they will not refuse to give him a passing call, and to believe that many honest and worthy tradesmen, men of probity and rectitude, are to be found even out of England.

THE WOOD-NUT.

BY F. BARNARD.

I marked where rose a hazel bush
From out its thicket nest,
And of the fruit which clustering hung
Its leaves among,
One tiny nut itself did push
More forward than the rest.

On its green husk yet scarce had summer dawned :
Its long green stalk did o'er the pathway bend ;
The leaves that would have sheltered well
Its feeble shell,
Were left behind, as if it proudly scorned
To profit by the aid of equal friend.

And 'twas the first to catch that ripening ray
Which Nature's face in every hue perfects ;
'Twas first to court the touch of insect wing—
Vain, foolish thing !
To quit the shelter of the o'erhanging spray,
Whose leafy screen the embryo fruit protects.

Now mark the sequel :—as I gazed thereon,
A boy with rambling steps approached the spot :
How could the nut not tempt him as he passed ?—
That hour its last !
And in a moment, lo ! the fruit was gone,
Torn from its stem, and cast away to rot.

THE IRISH ASPIRANT.

THE following fact is one of those little episodes in life that are perhaps worth recording. A young, and, (what some people would call a *raw*) Irishman came to me some time since with a letter of introduction from Mr. H——, the worthy agent of Lord M——, in the sister isle; his name was Molynooks, (a perversion, I suspect, of the more aristocratical one, in this country) and his credentials represented him to be, what, indeed, he looked, viz., the son of an Irish farmer.

His father was a tenant of Lord M——, and had already written to his lordship, craving such patronage for his hopeful heir as would be likely to put him forward in the world; for, added the sire, with paternal partiality, "My boy is too good for farming; and, besides, seems ambitious to try his fortune in the world, and become a gentleman; so, therefore, I have sent him to London." My friend H——, however, was a practical man, and naturally thought, that as I had always been one also, an introductory epistle to me would be more likely to serve poor Molynooks, than the reception he might and did receive from Lord M——, in Grosvenor Square.

Nevertheless, when this youthful aspirant first appeared at my house, I must confess it was with considerable difficulty I could contemplate his grotesque appearance, or listen to his simple recital (much as I wished to do honour to my friend H——'s recommendation, and, reluctant as I felt to wound the poor fellow's feelings) without giving way to my risible inclinations.

Mr. Molynooks seemed about eighteen years of age—very tall, and tolerably robust, with a rubicund tint on his full cheeks, which served as a foil to a very pale nose and pointed chin. His head, moreover, was almost encircled by a frame of thick, carrotty locks, somewhat resembling an old tarnished frame, rudely carved; and together reminded me of those brick-dust copies from the inimitable works of Rubens, which one too often sees in great collections.

Luckily, he had (on entering my room,) taken from the top of this portrait a little narrow-brimmed hat, which must have been made for a younger brother (from whom it was perhaps a parting gift,) else indeed I suspect my wife, who happened to be present, could no more have preserved her gravity

than myself, on hearing that such a being was a candidate for literary fame.

There was, however, an air of confidence about the good-natured creature that made him slow to suspect us of anything but admiration, as we gazed upon his close-buttoned, snuff-coloured coat reaching to the heels, and set off by a dark, blue handkerchief, tied tightly enough round his throat to have suffocated any man living upon more inflammable diet than potatoes. But when our eyes descended to his shoes (which they did for fear of looking him in the face), and saw what the short trousers unluckily betrayed, that he had on no stockings at all, the rigidity of our features slightly gave way, and Mr. Molynooks fairly set us off by laughing himself, while he apologized for "not putting on his best clothes, to pay the visit to a lady."

Of course, I soon set him at ease on this score, and proceeded to inquire in what way I could best serve him, and oblige my excellent friend Mr. H——.

"Why, den Zur," said he, "in the richest brogue imaginable, 'ef ye happen to hav any sort of akquaintance wid the dyrectors of the Hingy house, who should be plaized to put my name down in their books, I would be grately honored thereby, and manewhile, zur, I'll try to emprove mesel' in writing."

"Well, Mr. Molynooks," I replied, "you may depend upon my doing all I can for you, but really, without knowing more particularly your general qualifications, I shall be rather at a loss what place to seek for you."

"Oh, niver mind that, zur," said he; "only do you find the plaice, zur, and I'll answer for making mesel' suited thereunto in no time whatever. Meanwhile, zur, I thank you and your good lady there, for resaiving me so kindly, and wish you good morning."

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed my wife, as he left the room, "he looks not only very tired, but half starved. Do ask him to have some refreshment, and rest himself a little."

The surmise was not ill-founded, for, although he showed a little coyness when invited to the pantry, this soon vanished at the sight of a sirloin, and he proved that, however full his heart might have been, his stomach was very empty when about to leave us so abruptly.

But both together were evidently overflowing, and he vowed eternal gratitude to Mrs. Simms, for her "very great kindness towards him, which surely he never could forget."

Nor did he, I do believe; for within a week's time he called again to report progress, yet was totally unable to do so, till he had assured himself from me, "that Mrs. Simms was quite

well." He then proceeded to tell me how hard he had since been working to "emprove his English larning, and most particularly his hand-writing."

Whereupon I congratulated him, expressing my regret that no situation suited to his peculiar talents had yet presented itself.

"Oh, niver mind, zur," said he, "I can wait patiently a little while yet, because then I'll be the more fit to go to Hingy, no doubt."

Well, after this, he absented himself so long, that we began to think he must either have gone to "Hingy" in a hurry, or returned to Ireland in despair, and I was on the point of writing my friend H——, to inquire, when Molynooks's grinning face appeared, looking so plump, beneath a new hat, (which, like his other garments, now *fitted* him) that our alarms were soon dispelled, and our various suspicions roused as to the cause of such a sudden metamorphosis.

He commenced, as usual, by expressing his sincere hope that Mrs. Simms (then in the room) was very well, but followed up this prologue by delicately insinuating that he would explain to *me* by and bye all about it. Upon this intelligent hint, my wife thought it prudent to retire; and, drawing near me, he thus began to state his case, and somewhat with an air of mystery.

"Well, then, zur, I'll just tell you what it is, by which I am zure you'll know I've behaved like a gentleman, and a man of honour likewise."

"Oh, no doubt—no doubt, Mr. Molynooks," I observed; "I see how it is,—you're going to get married forthwith, or perhaps are so already, for I know, with you Irish gentlemen, it is pretty much a word and a blow, in these matters."

"Why, yes, zur," said he, "that *is* pretty much the case, surely;" and here, after hesitating a little, he added, "but, I hope your good lady, though she *has* left the room, is quite well?"

"Perfectly so, Mr. Molynooks; she was, however, willing to afford you every opportunity of explaining your affairs to me, which, pray do, as I really feel anxious for you," (and in truth I began to suspect the poor fellow had got into some scrape, when he thus proceeded to explain.)

"Ye must know, then, zur, that, happening mesel' to lodge in the house of a young lady, who kept a child-bed linen warehouse, and dealt in shirts likewise, I would often assist hur on a bizzy day, by sorting of these last articles, by which we became so plazed with each other, that we resolved to become partners, like, altogether, for life; and so, sure enough, zur, as you say,

we are man and wife, as well as partners in the child-bed linen warehouse, and the manufactory for shirts likewise."

"Well, then, Mr. Molynooks, I suppose you no longer wish to go to India, if you are *really* married to this young woman, and carrying on such a prosperous business here?"

"Really married, is it you say, zur? Oh, surely you don't think, zur, I'd decaive an innocent young creature in that way, though she did say she admired my person and manners, when I first made love to her, and I belaive would go to Hingy wid me, if ever I axed her. So, pray tell Mrs. Simms dis, upon my honour, zur. And, hoping your good lady, like mine, will long continue quite well, I must thank you both for your great kindnesses, and say—good bye t' ye!"

Another interval of several months again passed, before Mr. Molynooks paid us a visit, and then his appearance indicated that the child-bed linen concern, and shirts likewise, had failed to supply him with the gay apparel he sported when last with us, all of which his long face soon confirmed, as well as his tongue.

After, therefore, as usual, expressing his hope that Mrs. Simms was quite well, he proceeded to state that, finding business too slack to support both him and his wife, he had resumed his *writing* lessons, preparatory to going out to Hingy, if I would again assist him to do so.

"What!" I said; "and leave your wife behind?"

"Oh dear no, zur, she'll go wid me, if I get the good appointment I hope for; besides, zur," he added, "we have fortunately got no bairns yet," and rather jocosely hinted that *they* would be bad customers to a child-bed linen warehouse, though he took a few shirts out of it, now and then, to be sure, to help the consarn. But how lucky it was, zur, for us both, that I've kept up my handwriting."

"Well, perhaps it is," I replied; "still, I can't exactly see how this branch of your education should be so much more important than all the rest, unless, indeed, you mean to go out as a schoolmaster, and even *then* a little knowledge of arithmetic will, of course, be required, in India as well as England. So, too, if you enter the army, one is quite as much wanted as the other. Do pray, therefore, Mr. Molynooks, explain this to me, before I make any application to the India Company on your behalf."

"Oh, it is sartainly not for a soldier I'd go, though I balaive my figure and face would help me on there better than writing: still, I niver did like fighting in my own dear country, where we've so much of it, and rather think myself fitted for a civil

capacity of some sort, and it is for that, zur, I have cultivated my writing so greatly."

What he could mean by thus harping upon his caligraphic accomplishments, I could not guess; and so, having put the question again, point blank, he first expressed his great surprise at my not knowing at all what he meant; and then confessed that, although his handwriting might not yet render him quite fit for the civil appointment he sought, nevertheless he did hope in a very short time to be sufficiently accomplished with the use of his pen, to deserve a *writership*.

It was with difficulty indeed I could make him understand how little round-text had to do with the duties of such a situation, and that it was an appointment exceedingly difficult to obtain, and with almost as much difficulty that I preserved my gravity on thus hearing the solution of that riddle which had so long puzzled me during my acquaintance with Mr. Molynooks.

Whether he perceived it or not, I could hardly tell, but he *looked* quite chap-fallen, muttered something about setting up a child-bed linen warehouse with his wife at Dublin, wished me good-bye, expressed a hope that Mrs. Simms might continue well, and I have not *seen* him since. I heard, however, with great satisfaction, from my friend H——, that Mr. Molynooks is settled with his wife in the little village of D——y, on Lord M.'s estate; and that while he keeps the accounts, and occasionally earns something by his *writing*, she has a tolerable trade in the sale of made-up linen, etc.

They both, Mr. H—— tells me, laugh at their past adventures in London; and, now they understand the joke, readily join with their witty neighbours in advising others not to depend upon the particular advantage of a round-hand in fitting other candidates for an Hingy writership. S.

THE YACHTSMAN.

THERE is land for the night, there is Ocean for day—
The breeze rushes seaward—I too will away;
Yonder my anchored skiff doth ride,
Tossing impatient upon the tide;

Its half-furled sail
Flies brisk in the gale,
And flutters to be free;
We will on, my brave!
For the rising wave
No terrors has for me.

The anchor is up—her wings are spread,
The white foam is bursting around her dark head;
Nobly she mounts on the rolling swell,
And softly sinks in the watery dell;
Onward she springs,
And the spray back flings,
As her keel the green wave cleaves,
And its course doth urge
Through the rustling surge,
Which her track still scatters and leaves.

Tenants of Ocean! I seek ye not,
For the hard gains of Commerce I care not a jot;
'Tis not for wealth that I traverse the main,—
'Tis not the garnish of life to gain.
Let the path for me
Be the boundless sea,
My music, the waves' hoarse roar;
Unknown to alarm,
'Tis these that charm
The bosom that seeks no more.

'Tis a glorious sight when the surf surrounds,
And the lightsome spray o'er the bowsprit bounds:
Swept on in the fleeting waves' embrace,
Fast, fast we fly, as they faster chase.
The blast gathers strong
As it drives us along,
And tight strains the bellying sail;
Up the green foaming steep
We climb, and then leap
From its crest to its billowy vale.

Child of the Ocean, dashing and bold
As the kindred waves that thy form uphold,
Till strength shall desert me, or death overwhelm,
This hand shall fondly still grasp thy helm;

The varied weather
We've braved together,
Thou hast ever been comrade true ;
Still, still will we ride
O'er the Ocean's broad tide,
Where the whistling winds pursue.

CLARENDON ;

A NOVEL.

BY WILLIAM DODSWORTH, ESQ.

CHAPTER XLIII.*

IN a room, sordid even in its neatness, Lady Susan Clarendon lay struggling hard with death. Inch by inch she contended with the grim destroyer, for the love of life was still strong within her ; and slowly, quietly, yet surely, the terrible avenger was gathering his forces for victory. Death was stamped upon her brow and written on her heart, and now she had nothing but to adjust her mantle, that her fall might be a becoming one at last.

Even in death, the indomitable will and nerve that had carried her triumphantly through so much, did not desert her. Ill in body, and wretched in mind, she still gave vent neither to murmur nor complaint ; but, convinced at length that her hour was come, proceeded to set her house in order, and make such reparation to those she had injured, as was still in her power.

"Bring your chair to the bedside, my love," she said, scarcely able to repress a sigh, as her languid gaze took in at a glance the well-darned, well-worn check hangings that adorned the

* Continued from page 99, vol. lvi.

crazy bed, the sanded floor, with a bit of flaring red-and-green carpet in the centre, the paltry dressing-table, with its cracked looking-glass that libelled the human face divine whenever you looked into it, and the two or three flimsy chairs that flanked the naked walls, and then contrasted it in her own mind with her dressing-room at Leven, luxurious in gilded fancies and mirrors, Turkey carpets, Sevres, cabinets, and costly bijouterie. "Draw your chair nearer, my love, and listen to what I have to say; for something tells me, Eleanor, that, ere many days are over, my lips will be silent for ever in this world."

"My dear aunt," said Eleanor Clarendon, in the sweet tones the dying woman had learnt to love so well, using the term of affection their connexion had sanctioned, "if what you wish to say would distress you, pray defer it to another time."

"No—no—no!" cried the dying woman, with all her old peremptoriness of manner, "there is no time like the present for discussing what is now in my mind; how can I tell whether I shall be alive to-morrow to tell it?"

Eleanor could not restrain her tears, but sat sobbing in her chair, with all the abandonment of grief. Then Lady Susan, stealing a withered hand out from under the bed-clothes, clasped one of the hot, soft hands of her protégée, and said, in a tone of unusual tenderness—

"Can you forgive me, love, for the part I played in wishing to force you to marry poor Norman Macdonald?"

"Why need you disturb yourself about that affair, madam?" said Eleanor, in a broken voice. "Mr. Macdonald, I am afraid, would have acted just as he did, had he been left to himself."

"No, child, he would not," rejoined her companion, sternly; "one word from me, at the outset of your acquaintance, would have immediately driven all ideas of love out of his head,—Norman Macdonald has been so accustomed from childhood to act by my wishes."

A faint—very faint smile was perceptible on Eleanor's delicately-beautiful face, as the proud old woman said this in her usual determined tone.

"Yes, Eleanor, you may smile," continued Lady Susan, in a gentler tone; "and yet, strange as it may sound, I have been the mainspring that has set all Norman Macdonald's impulses in motion from boyhood. I rescued him from a situation of imminent peril, at the risk of my own life, and from that day may date an influence on his destinies which I would now had never existed."

"But can such submission to the will of another—and especially that of a woman—accord with the well-known manliness of Mr. Macdonald's character?" inquired Eleanor, gradually

forgetting, in the interest she felt in the dialogue, how imminent was the peril to which it exposed her companion; "I have heard Erie Dennison describe him."

"Poor Erie!" sighed Lady Susan, sadly. "I shall never look on him and my gentle Lucy more." For once, tears stood in those keen, cold eyes, and they even fell upon her cheeks, as she added, "when I am dead, Eleanor, I could wish you to take up your abode with Erie and his noble-minded daughter, until Cecil rejoins you, if that should ever be. I suppose poor Norman has no chance of finding you a retreat?"

"None;" was the calm reply. "Mr. Macdonald and I are henceforth nothing to each other."

"I will not attempt to controvert your determination, however I may deplore it," said Lady Susan, sadly. "Poor, poor Norman!"

"Ah, madam, he will soon meet with many more worthy of him," said Eleanor, modestly; "a simple country girl, like myself, without either beauty or fortune, will surely never disturb the peace of mind of such a being as Mr. Norman Macdonald."

Lady Susan sighed, and relaxed the throbbing hand she held within her own, and at that moment her attendant announced Mr. Jasper Vernon!

Lady Susan attempted to raise herself in bed, as he entered the room, and then sank back again with a stifled groan. Eleanor was beside her in a moment, supporting her in her arms, whilst their awed and yet audacious visitor, conscious that he was playing a losing game, attempted to fortify his courage by a false temerity, and advancing up the room, exclaiming as he did so,—

"Is it possible, my dear Lady Susan, that I see you lodged in such a miserable hovel as this? Why, there is not even a carpet to the floor," calling up a look of disgust, as his foot came in contact with the beggarly rag that did duty in that capacity; "a beggar could not be worse lodged than your ladyship."

"Such as it is, the accommodation is good enough for me," said her ladyship, calmly. "What matters it, whether we go out of the world in a palace or a hovel? the soul can surely wing its way to its Creator as quickly from the one as the other!"

"But, the rank of your ladyship!"

"Rank, and all its earthly privileges, are fast fading from my view," was the calm rejoinder of the dying woman; "but it is not to bandy compliments with you, Jasper Vernon, that I desired to see you now."

"If you would make use of my house," said Jasper, with an affectation of timidity; "it would, I can assure you, be heartily at your service; and, at any rate, you would be properly waited upon there."

"I have my own servants!" said Lady Susan, haughtily; "when I am gone, they will, I trust, remain to protect Miss Clarendon in her lonely position, until Mr. Erie Dennison's arrival,—but, enough of this; I have come a long and, as it has proved, by God's good will, a fatal journey, to demand, at your hands, that justice should be done to the children of Colonel Clarendon!"

"My dear Lady Susan," stammered Jasper, affecting to be very much astonished at a speech he had expected from the first, "I am really not aware that Colonel Clarendon's family have any grievances to be redressed!"

"They have, sir!" said her ladyship, raising herself up in bed with a great effort; "dare you carry out the miserable—nay, awful farce you have invented so long, even in the very presence of your dying accomplice? Beware, Jasper Vernon, how you venture to trifle with me!"

"At any rate permit Miss Clarendon to retire for a few minutes," pleaded Jasper, humbly; "her remaining here can serve no good turn—"

"You are afraid, I suppose, to exhibit our guilt before eyes so pure," said Lady Susan, scornfully. "Let it be, however, as you will; Eleanor, my love, leave us for a time."

Eleanor complied, and Jasper Vernon having followed her to the door, locked it after her, and then creeping back to the bed sat down again with his hands supporting his head.

Lady Susan, too, remained silent for a few minutes, struggling apparently with her own emotions. At last she resumed in a voice whose hoarse and altered tones terrified even her crafty confederate himself.

"Rapacious as a wolf, and bloodthirsty as a tiger, you would have driven out these poor children from their birthright, and have suffered them to live or die as God willed it, had not a power higher than your own ordained it otherwise. Your first act was to quarrel with Mr. Cecil Clarendon."

"Cecil Dalton, you mean, madam," said Jasper Vernon, spite for the moment getting the better of his craft.

"Cecil Dalton!" echoed the dying woman, a vivid streak of red for a moment lighting up her pallid cheek. "In the name of all that is holy how did you acquire that information? There are two others only living that know it beside myself."

"It matters not," retorted Jasper, triumphantly; "it is quite sufficient for my purpose that I do know it. The young man,

methinks, sufficiently resembles Edward Dalton to lead one to the supposition of his parentage."

"But there is Herbert," cried Lady Susan, eagerly. "He, at any rate, is a Clarendon."

"What if I should tell you," said Jasper, suddenly lifting himself up, and looking her steadily in the face with those cold, vipers' eyes of his, "that Herbert Clarendon can never more trouble either you or I, Lady Susan?"

"Oh God!" groaned the wretched woman, sinking back upon her pillows. "Herbert Clarendon dead!"

"Herbert Clarendon dead!" echoed Jasper Vernon, with his icy stare, gradually rising from his seat.

A convulsive shudder shook Lady Susan's frame, as his words penetrated even to the heart whose pulsations it almost stopped, then with an expiring effort she raised herself up once more, until she sat up erect in bed,—stern, lofty, and threatening as she had been in her haughtiest days,—no trace of death upon that awful brow, no dimness in the glance of that eagle eye, firm in voice and unswerving in intellect, piercing him through and through with every glance and every word, as she heaped imprecations and curses, vengeance and threats of future misery on his head.

"Thou hast robbed the fatherless and despoiled their heritage! and yet what am I saying? Herbert Clarendon is not dead,—that beautiful child had nothing in common with death! Oh what a wolf in sheep's clothing did poor Clarendon place over his little fold,—and then to come here with thy cozening lies to tell me of poor little Herbert's death."

"My dear Lady Susan," began Vernon—

"Hush! hush!" said the dying woman, in an altered tone, "there is Clarendon himself, see!" and her companion in his terror noted that her eyes, which until now had been fixed fiercely upon himself, were resting vaguely on the opposite side of the room—"with his poor, gentle wife, and the babe she died in giving birth to; they are beckoning of me, Jasper—Hush!"

He felt the beatings of his own heart in the deadlike silence that followed her last word.

Gradually a gentle smile spread itself over the harsh features of the dying woman; a tender light for a moment gleamed in the depth of those dark grey eyes, and with a whispered, "I am coming!" she sank back amongst the pillows; and it needed not the rattle in the throat, the convulsive clenching of the hands, or the feeble quivering of the unconscious limbs to tell him that it was death!

Horror-struck, and trembling in every limb, he staggered to

the door and called loudly for help. Eleanor was in the room in a moment, closely followed by Lady Susan's maid, whilst one or two women, belonging to the inn, bewildered, yet inquisitive even in their terror, crowded about the door.

"Attend to your mistress!" said he, looking wildly round upon them, like a man suddenly aroused from a hideous dream. "I will run for the doctor, although I fear it is too late!" and before they could stop him he was gone.

A wild terror took possession of Eleanor's mind, as she approached the bed. Lady Susan's presentiment had already prepared her for what was about to happen, and one glance at the still open yet glassy eye, and fixed expression of countenance assured her, that with Lady Susan Clarendon earth had passed away for ever.

CHAPTER LXIV.

WITH her last terrible maledictions still ringing in his ears, he went home to brood over all she had said. Jasper Vernon was a coward even when successful, and on this eventful evening it was not likely he would overcome his constitutional failing. A strange, uneasy terror kept possession of him all through the way home, for it was very dark in the long, lonely avenue that stretched nearly the whole way from the outskirts of the village to his own house; and his own guilty conscience readily conceived a thief in every bush he passed.

When within twenty yards of his own door, however, he became conscious—how, he scarcely knew, for it was far too dark to see anything—that some one was dogging him. With a palpitating heart he increased his pace, and then the figure crossed over the pathway and stood right before him, blocking up the way so effectually as entirely to prevent his passing.

"What in the name of God do you want, man?" he exclaimed in a trembling voice, repressing his first inclination to cry out for help, for something told him that this man might have some connexion with the scene he had just left.

"I have waited a very long time for you, sir," said a gruff voice, which sounded strangely familiar to his ears, but where or

when he had heard it he could not remember. "I dare not come up to the house in the daylight, for fear they should drive me away again without seeing you. I found out, however, that you were out, and so I determined to hang about the shrubberies until you came back."

"For what?" thought Vernon, a cold sweat starting out of every pore of his skin. "Could the man intend to murder or rob him?" and again the cowardly desire to cry out for aid took possession of him, and again the powerful grasp of his companion, who had by this time laid his hand upon his shoulder, took away all power of speech.

"You shall reckon all my waiting in the cold and wet in, when we settle, Mr. Vernon," said the man with a gruff laugh. "But enough of this just now; I want to see a good blazing fire, and what is still more to the purpose, a tumbler of hot grog and some meat, or I shall die outright, and then my death will be laid at your door."

"In God's name come in, and let me see who you are," cried Jasper Vernon with an effort, and without saying another word he dragged the man after him up to the door, and whispering to him to be silent, led him along the gloomy passage and stairs that had so frightened poor Herbert in his earlier days of misery, until he came to his own study, the door of which he unlocked very quietly, and pushed the man before him into the room.

He being behind for a moment himself as the man strode in, under pretence of taking out the key, that he might be able to lock it again on the other side to prevent intrusion; but for all this he only pretended to lock it, as he very well knew that no one in that well-drilled establishment would venture to intrude upon them.

The man had thrown himself into an arm-chair by this, and was basking in the welcome warmth of the fire. A lock of grizzled hair of a dark hue concealed his forehead and the upper part of his face, and although otherwise very much altered, Jasper Vernon knew that herculean frame and those stern gaunt features too well to doubt for one moment whom his visitor really was.

"I thought you were hung or drowned before this, Rudd," he said, with bitter malignity, which he strove in vain to repress, as he came up to the fire-place. "You have taken care to keep me in ignorance of your movements long enough to justify such a suspicion."

"No thanks to you if I am not," retorted the other, without altering a feature, as he stooped down to warm his rough coarse hands. "I have done enough in my turn for you to entitle one of us to swing for it; and as I'm a poor devil, and you by all

accounts are a rich one—how, the devil only knows—why I suppose I would be the scape-goat if needs were.”

“You’re exceedingly cynical,” said Jasper Vernon, sarcastically, as he opened a buffet and produced a liquor stand. Pouring out a tumbler of Hollands, he handed it to the vagabond with the observation,—

“I know you can toss that off without waiting for hot water—and now tell me to what happy circumstance am I indebted for the honour of your visit, Rudd.”

Rudd drained the glass at a draught, and replaced it upside down upon the table, turning his flushed, fierce face upon his host as he did so. His small fiery eyes made even Jasper Vernon shudder.

“What would you say, Mr. Vernon, if I came with the joyful tidings that I was about to bring back the youngster you have been harrying the country to find out? Wouldn’t you be delighted to recover him again?”

Jasper Vernon could have struck him down as he sat gloating in his triumph at the confusion of face he knew he must be betraying to this coarse brute. A curse, smothered in its birth, but still plainly audible to Rudd’s quick ears, did escape him even then, but that was all. He heard it all as calmly as if shame and destruction did not stare him in the face at the announcement.

“You mean young Clarendon, I suppose,” he said at last, in a calm voice.

“Come, come, Mr. Vernon, you needn’t pretend that now!” cried Rudd, gruffly: “Who else should I mean?”

“How should I know?” retorted the other, bitterly, “You may have twenty plots afoot at the same time, for I know of old, you’re not very scrupulous when times are bad with you.”

“I’m what other folk have made me, and yourself among the number,” growled the other, sulkily. “If rich folk aren’t very nice about the means they employ to get their wealth, a poor hang-gallows like me cannot be expected to be over particular.”

Vernon poured himself out a glass of brandy, which he drank off, and then refilled Rudd’s with the Hollands; and as his visitor sipped it he said,—

“Now let us understand each other, Rudd,—what is all this rigmarole about the boy?”

“Enough to make you shake in your shoes, Master Vernon,” said Rudd, triumphantly, “he’s not much more than a stone’s throw from this very room we’re sitting in;” and he watched the other’s countenance with keen interest, under the expectation that he would detect the confusion such an announcement was calculated to produc

Vernon, however, had served too long an apprenticeship to deception to exhibit such a weakness, now that he was prepared for such an evil, and his calm placid manner almost drove Rudd mad, as he said,—

“Herbert really returned!—the poor child is actually alive then, after all he must have gone through.”

“I can swear to that,” growled Rudd, with an oath, “although as matters be, you’d as lief he had never turned up again in this world, Mr. Vernon. As you are so pleased, however, I may as well just carry him on to London, and deliver him up to those he won’t care to run away from;” and he jumped up from his seat, and began to button the sailor’s jacket he wore, with sulky passion.

“Stop! stop! stop! we are not done with each other yet,” cried Jasper, trying to force him down into his seat,—“or stay, step into this closet for a moment, Rudd,” opening the door of a small room and pushing the man in, “whilst I ring for supper.”

“What will be the use of wasting time here,” retorted the man, who seemed to have taken his cue, and was now as bearish and untractable as ever Jasper Vernon could desire, and his huge form blockaded up the door-way as he spoke,—“I can get a belly full elsewhere, and no thanks to you, notwithstanding past help;” and his bloodshot eyes flashed fire upon the trembling and shrivelled form before him.

“You fool, I will give you all you want, if you are only patient,” cried Jasper, grasping his hand whilst he internally cursed the boorish obstinacy of his dangerous ally.—“Its bad doing business on an empty stomach.”

“And worse to pass such nasty jokes, I can tell you, on a poor devil in such a pickle,” growled Rudd, retreating more into the room;—“however, you may ring up the cold meat,” and he sat down in the dark whilst his host rang the bell.

In five minutes time the latter came and set him at liberty. “Get your fill first, and then we’ll have business afterwards,” said Jasper, coaxingly.—“Do you choose beef.”

“Any thing,—I could eat a dead horse, I’m so famished,” growled Rudd, falling upon the pile of meat the other took care to cram his plate with.

“The dolt! does he not see that that will allow me to drive the harder bargain with him,” was Jasper Vernon’s inward soliloquy.

“You don’t look to thrive with your new way of life, Budd,” he said, with a smile.

“Thrive the devil,” and the wretch washed down the first plateful with a tankard of ale, “I’ll be found dead in a ditch

some of these fine mornings, and a coroner's inquest will bring in a verdict of starvation over my bones."

"Would to God you were so now!" thought Vernon, with an uneasy shiver, as he remembered what a dangerous confidante this reckless villain was for a man in his position, with the Clarendon estates almost within his grasp; and he felt as if he could have given all his own wealth to have secured such a consummation at that moment,—“I could sit on that jury myself, I think.”

“It's much more to my taste, I can tell you, to sit here before a good blazing fire like that,” the man cried, as he threw down his knife and fork at last, and drew his chair nearer his host's, “than trudging in through mire and slush, perhaps for miles in the dark, with the wet rags that cover one's nakedness clinging to one's skin, as if they meant to grow to it, and perhaps a hungry belly into the bargain,—such work tells on the strongest of us, and as for a poor delicate brat like that of yours—”

Jasper Vernon sat up in his chair, and fixed his keen cold eyes upon his scarred swarthy features with sudden interest. “Ay! ay! a brat like that, I'll be sworn,” he cried, “wouldn't take it very kindly, Rudd.”

“One would have thought it would have been the death of him in a week, and yet how bravely he held out, poor little wretch, with his blistered feet and aching legs, never daring to utter a word of complaint. I tell you what, Mr. Vernon,” and he struck the table a blow with his huge fist, that made every thing on it dance again with the force of it, “I could almost make away with myself some times when I think of all I've made that poor thing suffer.”

“You're a maudlin idiot, Rudd,” retorted Vernon, angrily interrupting him, “and as for the brat you waste so much sympathy over, he was the most pestilential little devil I ever came across.”

“What a precious hypocrite he must be then!” added the other, fixing one of his hard keen glances on his companion; “why every body he came across but myself, pitied him.”

“Where is he now?” demanded Jasper, anxious to change the topic. “You surely hav'nt been fool enough to bring him up here, to run the risk of detection.”

“He's snug enough I can promise you that,” retorted Rudd, surlily, “although for the matter of that, I could bring him into this room in a couple of minutes at farthest.—But put on your hat and cloak and follow me.”

“Where?”

“You will see presently,—why what does this mean?” and the villain surveyed his companion with supreme contempt from

head to foot, as the latter hesitated to comply with his request. "You surely are not afraid, Mr. Vernon."

"What guarantee have I that I can comply safely with your demand, Rudd?" demanded Jasper.

"Please yourself," retorted Rudd, striding towards the door, "I can easily carry the brat to Dalton."

"Stay, stay, I will accompany you in one moment," cried Jasper, eagerly, "my cloak is in the passage," and he disappeared. The next moment he returned, properly equipped, having taken the precaution to conceal a small pistol about his person; and desiring Rudd to lead the way, and observe caution, the well-matched pair struck across the lawn, and presently emerged upon a secluded lane which led out into a valley, thickly wooded, and which was at all times rather shunned by the inhabitants of the neighbouring village, from the fact, that a mill which stood on the narrow brawling stream that flowed through it, had several years before been the scene of a horrid and revolting murder.

The mill had been abandoned immediately after this appalling tragedy, and was now in a very dilapidated state, and from its gloomy position in the midst of black dense woods, had become the resort of poachers and ruffians of the neighbourhood, who certainly contributed their full share of guilt to sustain the unenviable notoriety it had acquired.

Jasper remembered, as he strode after Rudd, who walked moodily in front, every little incident of that terrible morning, with a distinctness that astonished even himself. The young girl lying on the floor, her long black hair dabbled with the blood that had oozed out of a wound in her neck, her pale ghastly face, fixed eye and livid lips,—the old father terrible in the grief of a strong untutored mind, sitting bolt upright in his chair, watching with tearless eye, and compressed lip, the surgeon vainly attempting to call back the vital spark—and the mother moping and moaning in the chimney-nook, more terrible in her horror-struck insanity, than the dead corpse itself,—how it all came up like some frightful picture before him at that moment!

"Bayles has a jolly fire on at any rate," said Rudd, looking up, as he caught a glimpse of the fire light through a loop-hole in the wall.—"Take care how you step, sir, for a great many of the steps are broken away," and he presently began to clamber up the steep ascent, Jasper following him as well as he could, until they paused together upon what had once been the floor of the mill.

Grasping his companion's hand, Rudd led him over this in the dark, and shoving back a door, introduced him into a smaller

room, in which the fire they had seen on the outside was burning bravely.

Seated on a huge block of wood, Black Dick was busily superintending the preparation for supper which was cooking on the fire, in the shape of a good fat hare, smothered in onions and potatoes. In the far corner of the room, lay something dark on a quantity of straw, and Rudd snatching the lantern from the ricketty table, motioned his companion to follow him, and crept up noiselessly towards it.

Herbert was lying with his face turned upwards, one arm pillowing the uneasy head,—the black hair, once so beautiful and glossy, fell in a tangled heap over the perfectly colourless brow. The face was so thin and emaciated, that even Jasper—hard and cruel as he was—started and turned away from it.

Could it be that the death he saw stamped on that young brow, had at length wrung his flinty heart? Ah! no,—even at that moment he was counting out in his own mind, how much he would give the villain beside him, to complete his deed of cruelty and shame.

"He cannot live long, I think," he said carelessly, as he turned away, and went up to the fire again, "another month such as you describe him to have undergone, he would never trouble either you or me more."

"But we must be well paid for our trouble," said Rudd, stoutly; "its harder work killing any one in that way by far, than putting a knife quietly into them, and doing the trick in a moment. A couple of fiftys would be none too much for the job."

"They shall be yours, provided you take care I am not troubled with the brat again," said Jasper, after a pause, taking out his purse, and counting the notes which he placed in Rudd's hands.

"When it is all over, send me word by a trusty hand," said he, significantly. "Now guide me down the mill again."

He disappeared, accompanied by Rudd, and Black Dick began to busy himself once more with the supper.

"A very good night's work, Dick, my pal," cried Rudd, a few minutes after, springing into the room. "Why we may live in clover for months, now. What was that?" he added, turning pale, as the report of a pistol was heard apparently just beneath the mill.

"Some one poaching, probably," suggested his associate, whose head was running more upon the money Rudd held in his hand, than upon either pistol shots or poachers.

"It can't be,—no poacher would be out in the woods to-night. Get a torch and let us go and see."

"And leave the supper, to starve! You may if you like, but I won't;" and Bayles with real selfishness began to demolish the hare, by splitting it up the back in two equal portions.

"If the supper had not been piping hot upon the table, as you say," added Rudd, rolling a log towards it, to serve for a seat, "I would go and see, for I suspect some accident has happened to that rascal; however, if he carries pistols about with him, it serves him right."

"Certainly; shall we wake up the brat?"

"For what?"

"Poor devil, he will be so hungry," said Bayles, commiseratingly.

"Oh! let him eat up the scraps in the morning,—they are quite good enough for him," said Rudd, with a savage chuckle.

CHAPTER XLV.

IN descending the hill after leaving Rudd, Jasper Vernon accidentally stumbled and fell on that side on which he had concealed the pistol we have already mentioned, and which going off in consequence, wounded him very badly in the groin.

At first, the agony he suffered from the accident totally deprived him of the power of moving but by degrees. A feeling of numbness succeeded; which, although it alarmed him much more, gave him courage at least to attempt to crawl along on his knees through the wood, towards his own house. He was so faint with loss of blood as well, that it was three hours at least, before he affected this, so that midnight had arrived by the time he reached home.

His miserable old housekeeper and hungry valet were still astir, and were in fact both sitting up in a state of no small terror and bewilderment in the parlour of the former, earnestly speculating on the reason that could keep a person of such regular habits as their master from home at such untimely hours. The footman had brought up word from the inn, that Lady Susan Clarendon was dead, and that their master had left her some time before, and had then been sent to bed—the two old creatures determining to sit up alone to await his return.

Suddenly a hasty, yet feeble tug at the bell of the outer door was heard, and the pair exchanged glances.

"That be master, surely, James," said the old woman, peevishly; "and yet it be not his ring, neither."

"It be so very feeble; and yet it must," quoth the old man: "suppose we go see"—and suiting the action to the word, the miserable pair got to their feet, the old woman carrying the candle, and her companion a rusty rapier as a protection against an attack. They crept along the doleful passage like a couple of miserable ghosts, condemned to return to the scene of their earthly career as an expiation for their crimes.

"Ask through the keyhole, who be there, James," whispered the old woman, whose teeth began to chatter with fright. "It may not be master, after all."

"Who is there?" demanded the shrill, cracked voice of the old valet, who could not hold his weapon steady through trepidation. "Is that you, master?"

"Yes! yes! for God's sake let me in, for I am badly wounded," was the reply. "You old fools! what are you afraid of, I should like to know?"

"The house be so lonely when only Margery and I are up," said the old valet, as Jasper reeled in upon them. "O dear, what is the matter?"

"Matter enough," growled Jasper, sinking down into a chair; "here, Madge, you old ass! run up into my dressing-room and get an old shirt, to use for bandages;—does the old idiot hear?" he added, stamping his foot, on perceiving that she did not attempt to move.

"Dost hear, Madge?" cried the old valet, shaking her by the arm. "Master wants a bandage, old woman!"

"And call Richard, ass! at the same time, and tell him to ride down for Dr. Mead, as quickly as possible," added her master, as the old woman prepared to obey. "Now, James, help me into the dining-room."

"Had we not better get you into your bed-room, sir?" inquired the old man in a kinder tone than he usually spoke in. "You will not be so good to move when the wound gets stiff."

"Perhaps I had," said Jasper, who felt himself fast sinking into a kind of stupor. "Here! your arm;" and he struggled to his feet.

He nearly fainted with pain and exhaustion before he reached his room; and when he did so, and sank upon a chair, so deadly a faintness came over him, and the change it wrought in him was so apparent that the old valet thought he was really gone.

"Oh, if Dr. Mead would only come," whimpered the old

man, who was almost helpless through age. "Shall I undress you, sir?"

"Not until Dr. Mead comes," whispered Jasper, feebly. "Bid Margery send me some of her waters—some aniseed, or anything she has by her."

"A little brandy, mayhap, would be better," suggested the old servant, with an air of bewilderment.

Jasper Vernon closed his eyes, and Nixon, fearing that he was really growing insensible, flew to the buffet where he knew his master kept his liquors, and pouring out some brandy in a tumbler, brought it back and placed it to his lips.

Jasper swallowed a little, and rallied sufficiently to inquire whether the groom had been dispatched for the doctor, and being answered in the affirmative, closed his eyes and endeavoured to await patiently the latter's arrival. With all his stoicism, however, a casual twitching of the lip betrayed the agony he endured, and it was with a mighty sigh of relief that he at last heard, from the noise beneath, that the man had returned, probably in company with the object of his search.

"Go down and describe to him how it happened," he said, suddenly looking up; "tell him I was going through the plantations alone, and, accidentally falling, the pistol went off, and wounded me in the groin," and with an imperious wave of the hand he motioned the man from the room.

The moments that elapsed before the surgeon was ushered into his presence seemed hours to a man suffering such dreadful agony as he endured. Twice he was on the point of calling out, and both times with a great effort he restrained himself, and endeavoured to await patiently the doctor's arrival.

Up he came at last, sleek, rosy, and jovial as ever was mortal man, with a plump rotundity of person that did one good to behold.

"I am pained to hear that you have met with an accident, Mr. Vernon," was his opening salutation, smiling blandly on the distorted visage of his patient.

"And a very bad one, too, doctor," was the sardonic answer. "Had Nixon not better undress me before you probe the wound?"

"It would be better, certainly. Do you feel much pain?"

"I did at first; but that soon went off, and I suppose I fainted with the loss of blood; because, when I came to myself again, beyond a terrible numbness about the seat of the wound, and a general weakness, I could scarcely have known that I had met with such an accident."

"A very bad sign," *thought* Dr. Mead. He looked grave for a moment, a great feat with him, and then said, "You had better allow Nixon and Richard to carry you, Mr. Vernon, as any exertion on your part will only increase the danger. Be very gentle, my good fellows." And the two men, not without some resistance on the part of the patient, transferred Jasper Vernon to his bedroom, and placed him on a couch.

The task of undressing him was much more difficult than they had anticipated; for the blood had coagulated and soaked so into the clothes, that every movement gave Jasper the most intense agony. He shuddered and felt very sick indeed when he caught a casual glimpse of the wound, all jagged and bloody, and would have fainted, had not Dr. Mead made him swallow a very powerful cordial.

The greatest suffering he had to go through yet, however, was when the doctor began to search for the ball. How the first sharp pang thrilled through every nerve, sending the feverish blood from the face, and making the house ring again with the shrieks he could not stifle! The old valet and the groom felt sick even, and turned away their heads, whilst the decrepid housekeeper shook in every limb, and began to mumble the prayers she had forgotten since her youth.

He was so feeble by the time the ball had been extracted and the wound tightly bandaged up, that they lifted him as easily as if he had been a child into the bed, and the doctor, desiring the valet not to leave him during the night, and to give him some cooling drink whenever he needed it, took his leave.

A night of terrible anguish followed to the wretched man. How often, during its lonely watches, did a terrible spectre sit at his bedside, torturing his delirium with its dusky terrors! How often did the figure of that poor child whom he had so lately seen lying, lank, hungry, and emaciated, on his miserable bed, scare away his uneasy slumbers! How many a good resolve did he make, that with returning strength he would atone for all!—if, alas, he was ever permitted to rise from that bed again!

Rudd and his companions in the mean time had left the old ruined mill, and were now trudging wearily on towards London; Bayles and Rudd in front, Herbert, poor little fellow, lagging footsore and heart-broken in the rear.

All the ruddy bloom that had once again begun to mantle in his cheeks during the few fleeting, happy days he had spent under the good doctor's roof, was alas fled, and instead, a sickly pallor had overspread his meek and patient countenance. He had grown tall, too, for his age, and looked like a plant that ha

shot up beyond its strength to catch the light and warmth of the sun. Herbert was in fact outgrowing himself.

Exposure to every alternation of weather, brutal treatment, and miserable food, had already sown the seeds of a terrible complaint in his system. The hectic flush, the sudden heats and cold, icy sweats, the ravenous appetite at one moment, and at the next an absolute loathing of food, had already developed themselves with startling plainness. And yet the poor child fancied that it was but a passing faintness that came over him so often, and under the influence of which he scarcely had strength to drag himself along after the two ruffians in whose power he was. Alas! the happiest news he now could have heard would have been to be told that the hand of death was upon him. What a happy release it would be to the poor little fellow, more miserable in his degradation than the beasts of the field, to have lain down to sleep with the curses of Rudd ringing in his ears, and to have waked up among the angels!

"Keep a sharp eye upon the younker, Bayles, or he'll give us the slip," quoth Rudd, who had lighted his pipe, and was smoking away quite contentedly; he has played me that trick once or twice already."

"What a little hypocrite he must be, then!" rejoined Black Dick, who was marching along with his hands in his pockets, shivering with cold. "To look at his face now, Rudd, one couldn't believe such a thing possible. Where the dickens do you intend us to get a snack?"

"There's a snug place just a bit lower down the road," said Rudd, lazily; "a mile or so farther, maybe."

"Not more than a mile, I hope," growled Black Dick, casting an anxious glance up to the lowering sky. "Holloa! young-un, are you peckish?"

"Rather, sir," said Herbert, quickening his pace to a run, to keep up with the rapid strides of the two men.

"It will only be sarving the young hang-gallows right to make him fast till dinner-time, for running away with master Hemp," quoth Rudd, with one of his terrible frowns.

"No, no; he shan't be punished in that way, poor fellow," rejoined Bayles, with a sudden touch of compassion, as he noticed Herbert's hungry look. "I would go without my own breakfast, hungry as I am, rather than that."

"Thank you, sir," said Herbert, innocently.

The villain laughed and took hold of the boy's hand.

"Come, sheer off there, will you," growled Rudd, noticing the action, which brought back to his mind poor Hemp's kindness to Herbert. "I don't like any one to interfere with the boy but myself."

"It was only a bit of kindness," retorted Bayles, sullenly, but without releasing Herbert's hand. "The poor little wretch can scarcely drag himself along, alone."

"Let go the hand, Bayles!" said the ruffian, hoarsely.

Bayles felt the little trembling hand struggling to disengage itself, and touched, why, he scarcely knew, he let go the hand, and interposed between Rudd and his victim.

"You shall not strike the boy, Rudd," he said, firmly. "If you must fight with any one, attack me."

Rudd thrust him aside with a surly laugh, and ordered Herbert to come to him.

"Not if you intend to beat him, Rudd. As sure as you're standing there, he shall not stir unless you give me your word for that!" cried Bayles, passionately. "Confound you! my blood boils whenever I see you raise a finger against him."

"Who is going to illuse him, idiot? Not I for one, at any rate," growled Rudd, who had now got Herbert by the hand. "I only want to keep my property to myself—that's all."

"I won't see him abused; remember that," said Bayles, in a deep, stern voice. "There's something in his meek, gentle look that, villain and devil as I am, goes to my heart. I had a boy once, and he was just as gentle and as good, and by the memory of my dead child I swear you shan't tyrannise over that boy!"

Rudd sneered and frowned, but did not speak. With all his daring, he feared Bayles, whom he felt to be his match; and so he walked on in silence, still grasping Herbert by the hand. The other man followed close upon them, with his arms folded over his chest, his nostrils distended, his face flushed with excitement, and his solitary eye fixed intently upon Herbert, whom he had now after a fashion taken under his protection.

"There's the house," said Rudd, at length, breaking silence, as a turn in the road brought a small public house into view. "It's a poor place, eh?"

"Poor enough for us that have money in our pockets," rejoined Bayles, with a gruff laugh. "A week ago it would have been high enough for us, I fancy."

Rudd growled something in reply which did not reach his companion. Herbert felt his hand grasped still more tightly at the moment, and Rudd striding out still more vigorously, in a very short time was standing within the door.

"Can you get us some breakfast, mother?" he asked, in his usual gruff way, addressing the pale, drooping woman who came forward to receive his orders.

"We haven't much in the house, sir; but if you can wait a

few minutes I can soon make you comfortable," she said, glancing pityingly at Herbert.

"What can you give us to be going on with? any cold meat in the house?" he asked, looking suspiciously round.

"We have a ham shank."

"Nothing better! put it on the table here, before the fire, with a loaf of bread and a pot of ale, and get us the best breakfast you can, and as soon as possible."

And apparently convinced that his orders would be obeyed as promptly as possible, Rudd threw himself on the settle before the fire, and began to watch with lazy interest the preparations for the morning meal.

Bayles in the meanwhile had carried Herbert to the horse-trough outside to perform his ablutions, and now came in looking certainly much cleaner and fresher for his performance, and took his seat on the other side of the chimney nook, Herbert crouching at his side. The sickly-looking woman had already covered the little table with a cloth, and having furnished it with plates and knives, placed the meat and bread on the table.

Rudd cut a couple of immense slices of the ham, which he placed between two hunches of bread, and began to devour them with the voracity of a wolf. Bayles contented himself with a more moderate slice, half of which he slipped into Herbert's hand, unknown to Rudd, and ate the remainder himself without much apparent relish.

Whilst thus engaged, the door opened, and a stout, buxom woman entered the kitchen. Rudd was lying with his back turned towards her, watching the broiling of some collops. He did not look up, although his head and even some portion of his countenance was visible to her, as she stood in the shadow of the doorway. She was, as we have said, stout, plump, and rosy, with a benevolent expression lurking about her smiling lips and light grey eyes that attracted your attention the moment you beheld her. Her dress was of the homeliest description, but singularly clean, the whole betraying her station to be a very humble, though probably, not a struggling one after all.

For a moment she seemed irresolute how to act, for a host of varying sensations flitting across her honest kindly face, and then with one glance at Herbert, which though fleeting and momentary, was full of significance, she glided across the sanded floor and disappeared into the room beyond.

Of all the three beings who had been in the room when she entered it, Herbert was the only one who had noticed her, and a thousand wild hopes, and a thousand still wilder terrors were

stirring at his heart, as he watched her steal so silently across the floor, and disappear as we have described into the private sanctum of their hostess. Aid was once more at hand, in the person of honest Natty Gyde, or how could Natty's wife, gentle, loving, motherly Meg be there? Meg it really was, for they were within a couple of miles of Natty's forge, and Meg was out on a business trip to dispose of her eggs and butter, the pale, drooping landlady being one of her humble customers.

Meg had seen him! Meg had recognized him! and by her peculiar smile had said as audibly as words could have done, that he should ere long be rescued from the fangs of his merciless tyrant; the thought was almost too much for him, and lucky was it that Rudd at that moment yelled out, "Come, mother, are those collops not done yet, that you keep us waiting so long for breakfast?"

The woman put her pale, thin face in at the door, "I will have all ready directly, sir," she said feebly.

Herbert caught a glimpse of Meg's bright, eager face through the opening before it closed, and this was food enough for him to meditate upon through the whole of the meal that followed, alternated as it was by Rudd's brutality and coarseness.

"The lad and you had better lie snug here, to-day, to rest abit," he said to Bayles, at the conclusion of the meal. "I want to see some one hereabout, and may as well slip over this morning. I suppose you will have no objection to another snooze after the bare quarters you had last night?"

"If you dare leave the boy with me," said Bayles, surlily.

"Yes! you are answerable for him, mind. Here, mother, show these two upstairs to bed, and let them lie down till I come back. I shan't be long," he added, turning to Bayles; and, humming a tune, he took up his stick and went out.

Herbert breathed freely after he had gone, for he did not dread Bayles at all, in comparison with Rudd, but sate in his own warm nook, watching intently the door by which he now expected Meg to come out. Bayles had fallen into a doze on the settle immediately upon Rudd's departure, so that the boy had the coast clear to himself, and so, fixing himself securely in his corner, he turned his face towards that door, his heart beating rapidly or failing him altogether whenever a casual footstep in the adjoining room led him to hope that she was coming.

She did not come, however. Half an hour—an hour elapsed. The boy grew sick with terror, lest she should have gone with-

out leaving any message for him, and he could scarcely restrain his tears; still, Bayles dozed on, and still Herbert watched.

By degrees, the warmth and stillness of the place had their usual effect upon his worn and exhausted frame. He began to close his eyes and feel drowsy, and a pleasant sensation of ease spread itself over his aching frame. He still heard the crickets chirping on the hearth, and the lazy ticking of the old clock in the far corner, and strove still to keep his gaze fixed upon that door as earnestly as if his very being hung upon the issue.

And still Bayles slept on, and the boy, for a time, forgot all his troubles in blessed unconsciousness.

Suddenly he woke up with a start, to find the pale, melancholy face of the woman of the house bending over him. He glanced hurriedly over to Bayles, and now saw that worthy lying at full stretch upon the settle, snoring most lustily, and giving audible token that he was in the land of dreams.

"Has she gone?" he whispered, catching the thin, feeble hand that hung over his head,—*"dear, dear Meg?"*

"Hush—or he will hear you!" said the poor, pale thing, in a quick, still voice. *"She has!"*

"And left me here!" sobbed the boy.

At that moment, Bayles stirred, and half looked up. The woman shrank back into the deeper shadow of the corner, and laid her hand significantly upon the boy's head; Herbert never stirred, and Bayles was presently fast asleep again.

"You must not be afraid," she whispered, the next moment; *"Natty will move heaven and earth, to rescue you;"* and before he could ask more, she had glided away, and Herbert, the next moment, heard her bustling about amongst the plates and knives, in the little lean-to, in which half her existence was passed.

She had told enough, however, to keep him quiet and happy through the rest of the morning, and he could now go to sleep with a light heart, in the blessed consciousness that friends, able and willing enough to aid him, were at work to frustrate the baneful influence of the terrible Rudd, although those friends were only honest Natty and his simple Meg.

CHAPTER XLVI.

WITH her bonnet falling back upon her shoulders, her hair blowing wildly about her plump, rosy face, now bursting into a flood of tears, and at the next moment laughing with hysterical passionateness, sobbing, and panting with her race through the mud and mire,—now floundering deep in some treacherous quagmire, and, anon, rattling gaily over a heap of stones that happened to lay in her way, quite as unconscious of the one mishap as of the other,—Meg held on her way, right gaily, until the forge came in view, with its thin wreath of blue smoke curling fantastically up among the leafless trees.

Then she paused for a moment, and pulled her bonnet back to its old accustomed place again, smoothed her hair back from her brows, and adjusted her dress as neatly as she could, all the while walking rapidly on, endeavouring to calm down her spirits to their usual sober tenor. When within twenty yards of the old hut, the door opened, and Nan, a little taller, a little plumper, and a little rosier, came out, and seeing Meg, uttered a shrill cry of delight.

"Here is mother, back again, father; without her basket, for a wonder!" she cried, to some one in the forge; and, with a swoop, like a night-hawk, Herbert's old companion flew into her mother's arms.

Natty came out from his den, with his blue flannel sleeves rolled up nearly to his shoulders, and his leathern apron blowing about his legs.

"Why, wife, what is the matter now?" he cried, anxiously, as Meg came up to him, still holding Nan in her arms; "thou's riddled wi' mud from top to toe, thy hair is all blown six ways, for Sundays, about thy face, and—why, wife!" and Natty's voice rose high in terror, "thou's actually been crying; surely, no one has had the daring to ill use Gyde's wife!"

"Oh, Natty!" sobbed Meg, fairly bursting into tears, as the gigantic smith held her at arm's length; "oh, Natty!"

"Why, what the dickens is the matter with the poor little woman?" growled her husband, giving her a smacking kiss; "has any one been ill-using thee, wife?"

"No, no, Natty!"

"It's better for somebody, then," rejoined her husband, holding her in one arm with grotesque tenderness; "if they had, azooks, I'd not have left a whole bone in their skin!"

"But, Natty, no one has dared to lay finger on me!" said Meg, proudly; "who would—and I had you to the fore? but I'm only half wild with joy and delight,—I'm out of my senses, Natty!"

"I really think you must be clean, stark mad, Meg!" responded the smith, looking at her with a puzzled air; "where's the basket?"

"All safe, at Mother Dolly's!" said Meg, flopping down upon the bench in front of the forge. "What do you think I saw, not half-an-hour ago, there?"

"How can I tell?" retorted Natty, scratching his head, and laughing gaily; "not t'ould woman, sure-ly?"

"Oh, no, Natty, I saw—I saw—your brother!" cried Meg, speaking very low, and very distinctly.

"Rudd!" growled Natty, lifting himself up with a sudden start, and towering above the little shrinking woman, like some gigantic cyclops, with his swart, dusky visage, flashing eyes, and swelling muscles; "you didn't see Rudd, wife?"

"I did, Natty!—it almost gave me a turn, but I didn't cry out, or he would have seen me; and Natty, he had that poor, dear boy with him still. Oh, Natty—Natty!" and the true, loving-hearted woman rose up, and threw herself upon his breast, sobbing out her words with startling earnestness. "Oh, Natty, as you hope for mercy, save that poor boy from that terrible man,—for Nan's sake,—for mine, Natty!" and she sank down again, all in a heap, at his feet, insensible.

"Has the fiend dared to cross my path again?" muttered the smith, lifting Meg's unconscious form upon the bench, with a sort of rough tenderness, that made him look still stronger and more athletic than he was. "In everything—in a mother's love—a father's wealth before me! No, Meg, I wronged thee,—good, true-hearted, loving wife,—I wronged thee!" and his rough lip quivered as it pressed her cold, pale forehead; "thou, at any rate, he could not buy," and with an unconscious smile he placed her back against the wall of his humble forge, and began to pull down his sleeves.

"Tell your mother, Nan," he said, in a low, hoarse voice, addressing his daughter, "when she recovers, that I am gone to Mother Dolly's, and that she must go home, and remain there until I return. If Rudd should come—but, he dare not!—he dare not!" he added, as a frown distorted his usually placid features, and again stooping down, he kissed his wife's lips tenderly.

Meg shivered, sighed, and opened her eyes.

"Are you not gone, yet, Natty?" she asked, feebly.

"In a moment, wife; as soon as you are better, go home;

and stay there until I come," he reiterated with emphasis. "Nan can wait here for me until I come back. You are not afraid to stay by yourself, my lass?"

Nan laughed merrily at such an idea, and Natty, patting her head approvingly, strode towards the door. When he reached it he turned round again, for Meg had tottered to her feet, and, with her hands pressed convulsively on her breast, and her little, plump, tidy figure swaying backwards and forwards with the feelings that stirred within her breast, exclaimed in a low, earnest voice, "Oh, Natty! do not let that poor boy remain longer in Rudd's fearful clutches."

"Trust to me, wife," said Gyde, quietly; "if we only once get him into our keeping again, all the Rudds in the world shouldn't get him into their possession," and the next moment he was gone.

Rudd in the meantime had gained his brother's house, which he approached with great caution, lest any of the inmates should happen to be at home, which, however, was not usual with them during the day. Satisfied, from the silence of the place, that he had nothing to fear on this head, he advanced boldly to the open door, and entered the clean-swept and tidy kitchen. It was empty, and for a moment the man paused, irresolute whether to proceed or not. It was evident that he had expected to see some one in this apartment, who, contrary to habit, was on this occasion absent. With a low whistle, however, he passed on, and, crossing a passage, came to a room, the door of which standing ajar, showed him a small apartment, neatly furnished, the fire burning in the grate, and the darkened light showing it to be occupied by an invalid.

Again Rudd paused and listened; but all around the house was as silent as the grave, except the cluck cluck of Meg's pea-fowl and the mellow cooing of the pigeons on the thatch, and, with a trembling hand, he pushed open the door and entered.

"You are home soon, girl," said the shrill, keen voice of Natty's mother, who sat propped up with pillows on the bed: "it seems scarcely an hour since you were gone;" and her sightless eyes were turned unconsciously upon the savage figure of her son.

Rudd did not speak. He was too busily engaged in noting the ravages a few short months had made in the only being he had ever loved, to hear her. The last six months had done the work of ages; and the miserable wretch who now lay before him seemed but the wreck of the once proud and imperious woman who called him son. Her grizzled hair had escaped from the band that enclosed it, and now fell over her gaunt,

yellow, bony face, from which all colour had fled, leaving it of a corpse-like hue; her lips were livid and shrivelled; and her long talons clutched convulsively the coverlid as she repeated in a whining tone, "You are soon home again, Meg. Does the woman hear? You are far too soon home again."

"Mother!" said a deep, hoarse voice.

The wretched old woman rose up in bed at this adjuration, and a far different expression for a moment flitted across her countenance as she exclaimed, "Who calls?"

"Mother!" again exclaimed that stern, low voice.

"That was not Dalton's voice. Edward Dalton, is it possible you have once more returned to the scene of your earthly crimes?"

"No, mother!" cried Rudd, flinging himself on his knees at the side of the bed: "it is your son who calls."

She passed her hands across his rough, deeply furrowed face with trembling terror, for that voice had awakened memories that had long slumbered in her soul. A ray of intelligence lit up the half idiotic expression age had already stamped upon her withered countenance, and again Rudd murmured, "Mother!"

Faintly as the words were breathed, she heard them, and again lifting herself up in bed, she exclaimed in her shrill, feeble voice, "How mirk the night is! Pull aside the curtain, and let a little leet into the chaumer. Natty! Meg! where are ye, that ye dinnot hear my son calling me?"

"Mother, cease thy wretched drivelling," interposed Rudd, fretted out of all patience by the miserable old creature's fancies. "I am your son—your Rudd."

"My son!" shrieked the old wretch, clutching the bed-clothes in her feeble grasp; "I have no son but Natty."

"You had, mother. When Dalton took you from your husband's house, you carried with you the unborn offspring of your guilty passion."

"Ah, I was young and giddy then, my dearie," sobbed his auditor. "I knew not how fallen, and vile, and wretched I could become, and that my whole life would be the penalty of my sin. And why do you come to disturb the last moments of a sinful, miserable wretch like me by such tales as these?" she demanded, fiercely.

"I am going on a long journey, mother," responded the man, sternly, "and have come to say good-bye."

"We are all going that road," said the wretched creature, incoherently. "Young and old, bad and good, we are all journeying away to our account. Begone, then, witness of my shame, and leave me to die in peace, if I can."

Her hand was resting on his head as she spoke. Rudd heard

her muttering and crooning in a low tone to herself after she had finished. Suddenly the sound was hushed, and in its place a faint groan was audible in the silence of the room; the hand fell off from the shaggy cushion on which it had rested, as the senseless frame sank back upon its pillows; the eye glazed; the mouth writhed convulsively, and then settled down into the horrible distortion of death. Rudd lifted himself up, as a vague terror, new and strange to him, shot through his heart, and felt that he was standing in the presence of death.



THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

It is the hour when our united souls
Appeal to Him whom each event controls.—
It is the hour in parting we agreed
(Inspired alike by one redeeming creed),
To steal to solitude, and prostrate there;
Invoke each other by the voice of prayer,
Imploring God to deign the vows to hear,
Which lift the loved, through love, to Him more near.
Divine association!—which doth blend
Our earthly comfort with our heavenly Friend;
Shedding the purest incense Nature owns
Around His throne who stablishes all thrones!
Blest hour! which piety doth consecrate;
Blest hour! which absence thus can mitigate;
Blest hour! that medicates slow-cankering time
With antidote benignant as sublime;
Blest solemn hour of dignifying thought,
When all the gauds of life are reckoned naught;
Which chain the mind in its celestial flight,
Soaring to regions of supernal light!
Blest solemn hour, in holy musings spent,
How hails my heart thy sanctified advent!

Blest solemn hour, when truth *that* heart inflames,
And hope of heaven all mundane wishes tames !
How sink the aspirations of the earth,
As brighter glories burst to radiant birth !
How dims the blaze of fame—the fame to seek,
Ambition tempts, to blanch Love's glowing cheek ;
To rend with sighs of agony the breast,
Pained and despised, for the illusive guest,
Which still delights its votaries to mislead,
Withholding from the heart the promised meed
Which valour covets—pride anticipates,
And hope awards, which ever antedates !
I thank thee for thy love, my soothing wife,
That calms, allays the tempest-flood of strife ;
That wins to peacefulness each hostile mood,
And teaches, without schooling, all that's good.—
I thank thee for it—deeply, *deeply* thank !
But holier obligation still hath sank
Upon my grateful heart, impressing there
The debt I owe thee for this hour of prayer.
Thou didst suggest it—*thou* ! God did create
To charm, to cheer, instruct and elevate.
And to induce observance, pledged thine own
To whisper then to me, and God alone.
Oh ! now thou art petitioning for me,
And—sweetest wife ! do I not pray for thee ?
I see thy holy form, in meekness bowed,
Thine eyes, just flinging back the lids which shroud,
Cast up entreatingly, to succour crave
For him, thy husband, who *must* danger brave.
I see thy holy hands with fervour raised
To Him whom ancient generations praised ;
Whom future ages will laudate and bless
For every benefit they here possess ;
For the more precious ones they hope to find
When Death these fleshly fetters shall unbind.
Oh ! what were man without that love of prayer,
Which not alone alleviates each care,
But adds an ardour to each joy—a zest
That brims to ecstasy the conscious breast ?
And who, save Woman, could that love inspire,
Whose bosom, glowing with seraphic fire,
Diffuses all around the quickening rays
Which vivify to piety and praise ?
Oh ! it *is* beautiful, to *thee* I owe
This boon, the *best* affection could bestow ;

My gentle Christian wife, religion may
 Well bear from lips so pure such mighty sway.
 How lovely seems the compact, and how chaste,
 When spirits, winged with adoration, haste
 To secret prayer, which minds etherealize—
 To secret prayer, which strengthens sympathies—
 To secret prayer, which only draws those near
 Who most below the laws of Heaven revere.
 Space is annihilated us between,
 As, in devotion thus, our souls are seen
 Conjoined, to mutually propitiate,
 Or to submit resigned to adverse fate.
 In hallowed fancy, I now kneel by thee,
 As thou appealest unto God for me;
 I hear the words, which breathe the humbled heart,
 That to the Lord its anxious fears impart;
 I hear the hope that trustful heart conceives,
 Which never holy confidence deceives;
 "Whatever is, is right," I hear thee own;
 (Melted to sadness by the pensive tone),
 As though, submissive still to the All-wise,
 Some fond misgivings for me *will* arise;
 Which, as a sin unwarrantable, base,
 Swift from thine heart doth Piety efface.—
 Oh, Piety! how—firmly armed by thee—
 Man can confront the rudest destiny!
 How, armed by thee, can find endurance still,
 To meet, support, and conquer every ill!
 How, armed by thee, the evils which prostrate
 And render the *mere* worldling desolate,
 So worthless can be held—the soul, in shame,
 Suppresses murmurs Providence would blame;
 Conscious, however disappointment pains,
 That He above in *wisdom* all ordains:
 And if we only do His time abide,
 But only *good* His creatures will betide.

NOTE.—"If I may be allowed to mention a more serious alleviating of absence, I shall take notice of one which I have known two persons practice, who joined religion to that elegance of sentiments with which the passion of love generally inspires its votaries. This was at the return of such an hour which they had agreed upon before parting, to offer up a certain prayer for each other. The husband, who is a man that makes

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a figure in the polite world, as well as in his own family, has often told me that he could not have supported an absence of three years without this expedient."

ADDISON.

"Henry the Third of England used to say, that he would rather converse one hour *with* God in prayer, than hear others speak *of* Him for ten."

ECHARD.

"An hour of solitude passed in sincere and earnest prayer, or the conflict with, and conquest over, a single passion or subtle *bosom* sin, will teach us more of thought, will more effectually awaken the faculty, and form the habit of reflection, than a year's study in the schools without them."

COLERIDGE'S AIDS TO REFLECTION.

AN OLD SONG.

'Twas an old song ; and long ago, in happy infancy,
I oft remember hearing it beneath the chestnut tree,
Whose gorgeous waxen blossoms, in clusters full and fair,
Were loading with their faint perfume, the tranquil summer air.

And this old song was very sad, with cadence slow and sweet,
Like chiming bells from some lone fane, where rippling waters
meet ;
It told of change and sorrow—false friends—departed love—
And of starry spirit watchers, in realms of bliss above.

When this old song oft made me weep, beneath the chestnut tree,
(My nurse was wont to warble as I rested on her knee),
"It is not well," she, chiding, said, "to shed such causeless
tears ;
Reserve them for *realities* of grief in coming years."

This old sad song!—I hear it now, beneath the selfsame tree,
 Again I hear those warning words the good dame spake to me:
 Ah! I turn away and smile; but the mourner's heart doth
 know,
 Such smiles, with painful meaning fraught, when tears have
 ceased to flow.

C. A. M. W.

LITERATURE.

NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

Nineveh and its Remains: with an Account of a Visit to the Chaldean Christians of Kurdistan and the Yezedes; and an Inquiry into the Manners and Habits of the Ancient Assyrians.
 By Austen Henry Layard, Esq., D.C.L. 2 vols. 8vo. London: John Murray. 1849.

There is, perhaps, no class of men to whom England is more justly indebted than to those rare and dauntless spirits whose energy or whose insatiable thirst for knowledge and discovery has from time to time irresistibly impelled to brave the severest toils and dangers, in order to penetrate the hidden and mysterious, and open new sources of enlightenment to their fellow men. Unlike other challengers of the world's applause, men of science, founders of institutions, the peculiar obstacles and discouragements which attend the path of the adventurer and traveller, which in reality increase their claim to our admiration and assistance, are too often the means of our withholding it. We have an instinctive unwillingness to enlist our services in aiding projects, where impediment and difficulty so predominate, as to give it the colour of a speculation, in which it would be hazardous to engage in the mere probability of success, however triumphant in the issue. Happy it is for us, that so great is the invigorating impulse of patriotic ardour in some breasts, that the cause of such men, however arduous or ill requited, will ever be esteemed honourable and enviable. Indeed, the unmerited hardships of a Columbus, or a Raleigh, so far from deterring

future aspirants to adventurous honours, seem to afford additional incitement, as if their misfortunes, like the crown of martyrs, shed a brighter lustre round their fame.

In modern times, a *Werne*, and a *Layard*, afford evidence of this. The last-named gentleman we have to thank, in addition to those valuable discoveries for which alone he may justly be esteemed a benefactor of his country, for one of the most interesting and instructive books of travel we possess. Mr. Layard has given us a most entertaining narrative of his adventures and occupations in the East: and by this means enriched our literary, no less than our scientific, possessions. Any account of the acquisition of a noble addition to our national antiquities must have been welcomed by us with peculiar interest and with gratitude, for the energy and perseverance necessary to obtain them. But the agreeable style of narration, no less than the nature of the subject, inspires us with deepfelt interest and admiration. Our sympathy is awakened throughout. Whether we accompany our traveller under the thrilling influence inspired by the exciting nature of his discoveries; wander with him among the Chaldean Christians; with the strolling Arabs in the native desert; or pitying behold him enter the mud-built hut, toil-worn and weary, for repose; we experience equally friendly interest in his company. Throughout the volumes are dispersed most attractive sketches of climate and scenery, charming pictures of patriarchal and pastoral life, diversified with amusing incidents of local character and custom. We are chained to the perusal of these volumes as by the witchery of a romance. Wending our way in imagination through the labyrinth of chambers which once constituted the palace of the Assyrian princes, we watch with eager curiosity what new event of history, or what unknown custom or religious ceremony, may be illustrated by the elaborate sculpture around; and on closing the book, we look around in vain for any traces of the wonders we have just seen, and "feel half inclined," with our author, "to believe that we have dreamed a dream, or been listening to some tale of eastern romance." Unlike the colossal temples and sculptured tombs of Egypt, which have long attracted the scrutiny, and been made the subject for the investigation of the learned, an impenetrable mystery surrounds the events and characters of Assyrian history. *Ninus*, *Semiramis*, and *Sardanapulus*, are exceptions. But the authenticity of the accounts received of them rests upon such a slender foundation, that it is doubtful whether to class them among the fabulous or genuine historical records. Assyria, the name of a nation which once maintained its sway of the largest portion of the civilised world, the birth-place of the patriarchs, and the seat of the earliest settlements

of the human race, by that mighty *name* alone is known to us. "It is indeed one of the most remarkable facts in history," observes Mr. Layard, "that the records of an empire, so renowned for its power and civilization, should have been entirely lost; and that the site of a city as eminent for its extent as its splendour, should for ages have been a matter of doubt. It is not, perhaps, less curious that an accidental discovery should suddenly lead us to hope that these records may be recovered, and this site satisfactorily identified." The honour of this discovery, one of the most remarkable and important in an age distinguished for a spirit of inquiry, is awarded to Mr. Layard. Who would have imagined that from beneath those vast mysterious mounds on the solitary shore of the Tigris, were to be disinterred the magnificent memorials of the splendour of ancient Assyria? from the shapeless ruins which alone mark the site of her once stupendous cities, should be revealed after a slumber of ages, records from which the history of her religion, manners, and customs, might be ascertained?

"The ruins in Assyria and Babylonia," says Mr. Layard, "chiefly huge mounds, had long excited curiosity, from their size and evident antiquity. They were at the same time the only remains of an unknown period—of a period antecedent to the Macedonian conquest—consequently they alone could be identified with Nineveh and Babylon, and could afford a clue to the site and nature of their cities. There is, at the same time, a vague mystery attaching to remains like these which induces travellers to regard them with more than ordinary interest, and even with some degree of awe. A great vitrified mass of brick work, surrounded by the accumulated rubbish of ages, was believed to represent the identical tower which called down the Divine vengeance, and was overthrown, according to universal tradition, by the fires of Heaven. The mystery and dread which attached to the place was kept up by exaggerated accounts of wild beasts, who haunted the subterraneous passages, and of the no less savage tribes who wandered among the ruins. Other mounds in the vicinity were identified with the hanging gardens and those marvellous structures attributed to the queens Semiramis and Nitocris. The difficulty of reaching the site of these remains increased the curiosity and interest with which they were regarded, and a fragment from Babylon was deemed a precious relic, not altogether devoid of a sacred character. The ruins which might be presumed to occupy the site of the Assyrian capital, were even less known and less visited than those in Babylon."

The first who entered into any serious investigation of these mounds of Assyria, was Mr. Kirk, resident of the East India

Company at Baghdad; a man whose influence, from his position and honourable character, peculiarly well qualified him for the task. The remains near Hillah were the first subject of his observation. The results, though trifling as to discoveries made, were extremely valuable from his description of the site of the ruins, having constituted the foundation of further inquiries into the topography of Babylon. In returning from Kurdistan to Baghdad, by way of Mosul, he was again attracted by these vast mounds, and engaged in a further research; but with the exception of a small stone chair, and a few remains of inscriptions, Mr. Kirk obtained no other Assyrian relics from the ruins on the site of Nineveh. These few fragments, afterwards transported to the British Museum, were but lately the chief, if not the sole collection of Assyrian antiquities in Europe! It was reserved for the honourable enterprise and industry of Mr. Layard to bestow upon us the benefit of those important discoveries by which he has so much enriched both our science and literature.

The reflections so forcibly impressed on the mind of the writer whilst contemplating the ruins of fallen magnificence, are vividly conveyed to us in the following language. "The scene around is worthy of the ruin contemplated. Desolation meets desolation. A feeling of awe succeeds to wonder; for there is nothing to relieve the mind, to lead to proof, or to tell of what has gone by. These huge mounds of Assyria made a deeper impression upon me, gave rise to more earnest thought and serious reflection, than the temples of Babylon or the theatres of Ionia."

In the middle of April our traveller departed from Mosul for Baghdad; and, in descending the Tigris, again beheld the ruins of Nimroud, under more auspicious circumstances for examining them. The spring rains had covered the mound with verdure, and the meadows around were luxuriant in flowers of varied hue. Amidst this vegetation might be discovered fragments of bricks, pottery, and alabaster, upon which were the well-defined wedges of the cuneiform character which served to distinguish the mound from a natural elevation of land. It was at this period that Mr. Layard formed the resolution of thoroughly investigating these ruins, whenever he might be enabled at any future period to do so.

When again passing through Mosul, in the summer of 1842, Mr. Layard ascertained that M. Botta, French consul there, had already commenced excavations in the large mounds on the opposite side of the river, called in the country Kongunjik. Mr. Layard thereupon directed M. Botta's attention to the mound of Nimroud, which suggestion, however, M. Botta de-

clined to follow out, in consequence of the distance of the mound from Mosul, and its inconvenient position.

M. Botta still continued his excavations in the mound of Kongunjik, and claims the honour of discovering the first Assyrian monument. Having directed measures to be taken for obtaining the sculptures said to exist in the mounds of Khorsabad, at some little distance, what was his surprise on the discovery of a suite of chambers profusely ornamented with representations of battles, sieges, &c., as it were an illustrated history of an unknown people. Numerous inscriptions explaining the events recorded in sculpture, in the cuneiform character, evidenced that the building was of a period preceding the conquest of Alexander, after which time the cuneiform writing was not employed. Hence its erection was reasonably referred to the inhabitants of Nineveh.

On the communication of the discovery to the Institute of France, M. Botta was liberally supplied with ample funds for the prosecution of his labours. He diligently persevered in them, and returned to Europe, enriched with choice relics of Assyrian sculpture, and collections of inscriptions still more valuable. The success of M. Botta's researches, which were not carried beyond Khorsabad, effectually roused Mr. Layard's enthusiasm. After many fruitless applications, sufficient to discourage a less enterprising explorer, he had the high satisfaction of obtaining, through the generosity of Sir Stratford Canning, the pecuniary means which enabled him to prosecute his further discoveries. For many reasons, it was necessary that silence should be maintained as to his proceedings, and on the pretence of going to hunt wild boars in the neighbourhood, Mr. Layard again descended the Tigris from Mosul, on a raft, accompanied by Mr. Ross, a British merchant, his janissary, and a servant. On landing at the village of Naifa, a miserable hovel, inhabited by an Arab family, was their lodging for the night. Not being in the most propitious circumstances for slumber, Mr. Layard thus describes to us the ideas which thronged his excited imagination: "Hopes long cherished were now to be realized, or were to end in disappointment. Visions of palaces underground, of gigantic monsters, of sculptured figures, and endless inscriptions floated before me. After forming plan after plan for removing the earth, and extricating these treasures, I fancied myself wandering in a maze of chambers, from which I could find no outlet. Then, again all was reburied, and I was standing on the grass-covered mound. Exhausted, I was at length sinking into sleep, when, hearing the voice of Awad, I rose from my carpet, and joined him outside the hovel. The day already dawned. He had returned

with six Arabs, who agreed for a small sum to work under my directions. Then commenced the exciting research. Awad, Mr. Layard's Arab host at the hovel, had his suspicions of the object of search, which he could scarcely conceive to be limited to mere stones. Carefully collecting the scattered fragments of gold leaf he could find in the rubbish, he presented them in a confidential manner to Mr. Layard. "A Bey," said he, "Hallah, your books are right, and the Franks know that which is hid from the true believer. Here is the gold, sure enough, and, please God, we shall find it all in a few days, only don't say anything about it, or the matter will come to the ears of the pasha." This caution was not without reason, for exaggerated rumours of wealth obtained, had already so excited the jealousy and avarice of the Cadi, that every possible obstacle was henceforward thrown in their way. The excavations, nevertheless, continued to be carried on actively, and more important discoveries of elaborate sculpture were obtained sight of, when an agent of the pasha appeared, to forbid further proceedings. Wearied with these annoyances, Mr. Layard endeavoured to obtain an order from the Porte, to prevent further interference. On returning from a visit to the scene of operations, however, he was acquainted with the fortunate event of another pasha's being appointed, more favourably disposed towards him. And now, each day, important discoveries of mural tablets, winged lions, and figures of marvellous forms were made. One morning, two Arabs, with their mares at full speed, approached Mr. Layard, crying, "Hasten, O Bey, hasten to the diggers, for they have found Nimroud himself. Hallah, it is wonderful, but true. We have seen him with our eyes!" The fugitive Arabs, to Mr. Layard's great regret, who anticipated the consequences, on reaching Mosul, rushed into the bazaars, crying, that "Nimroud had appeared!" An order consequently followed from the pasha, that "the remains should be treated with respect, and only two workmen allowed to carry on their operations."

The winged lions were next discovered. "I used," says Mr. Layard, "to contemplate for hours these mysterious emblems, and muse over their intent and history. What more noble forms could have ushered the people into the temples of their gods! What more sublime images could have been borrowed from nature by men who sought, unaided by the light of revealed religion, to embody the conception of the wisdom, power, and ubiquity of a supreme Being! . . . They had awed and instructed nations which flourished three thousand years ago. . . . Before these wonderful forms, Ezekiel, Jonah, and others of the prophets, stood, and Sennacherib bowed;

even the prophet Abraham may possibly have looked upon them! . . . For twenty-five centuries hidden from the eyes of man, they stood forth once more in their ancient majesty."——

The law of Arab hospitality, "My house is your house," often subjected Mr. Layard to visitors more frequent than welcome. Having been presented by a sheik, as a mark of friendship, with a skin of honey, a cheese, and a Kurdish carpet, an expectation was hinted at, through the medium of his secretary, as to some recompense. On Mr. Layard expressing his regret that the trifling differences in matters of religion should preclude the possibility of the Effendis accepting anything from him, the secretary replied, "These are his attendants, not so particular as he; and, thank God, we are all one." Mr. Layard's last resource to get rid of his importunate demand was, the reflection that there was no bazaar in the village,—that some time must elapse before such articles as he required could be procured from Mosul, and that he could not think of trespassing on their valuable time by detaining them so long." This was the last importunate visit from a Kurdish chief.

Our indefatigable explorer now turned his attention to the great mound of Kongunjik, opposite Mosul, where again his labours were richly rewarded. Mr. Layard was now desirous of sending home some of the sculptured slabs. Carefully packed in felts and matting, and screwed in roughly made cases, they were placed upon a raft, and floated down the river from Baghdad to Busrah, and from thence to England.

The account of Mr. Layard's visit to the Tigari mountains, inhabited by the Chaldean christians, is both interesting and valuable; as acquainting us with the social and religious condition of this simple and primitive people. The important position the Chaldean church once held in Asia, renders the subject one of much historical interest.

More curious still is his visit to the Yezedis tribe, whose midnight orgies are thrillingly related. "In their creed," says Mr. Layard, "there is a strange mixture of Sabeanism, Christianity, and Mahomedanism; with a tincture of the doctrines of the Gnostics and Manishæans."

The excellent judgment and kindness displayed by Mr. Layard, in his government of the little community of Arabs over whom he presided, and established the most cordial unity among them, is much to be praised. Under these amicable conditions, their labours were successfully continued, and numerous ranges of apartments, sculptured tablets, and the singular obelisk now in the British Museum, were found. "On

Christmas day," says Mr. Layard, "I had the satisfaction of seeing a raft bearing twenty-three cases, in one of which was the obelisk, floating down the river."

The removal of the heavier objects, as the winged bulls, not originally contemplated, was a more difficult matter to achieve. Diligence and skill, however, triumphed over all obstacles. The meritorious and honourable exertions of Mr. Layard were now completed, to which we are indebted for the fortunate possession of materials, sufficient to instruct us in the history and civilisation of one of the most ancient and illustrious nations of the earth.

From the convincing testimony that Mr. Layard's researches have furnished us with, we have enduring evidence of the power and grandeur of that magnificent nation, now become a desolation and a waste, which was once the glory of the ancient world.

Another important feature which gives additional value to the present volumes is, Mr. Layard's able dissertation upon the antiquity of the monuments he has discovered, in connection with the people by whom they were erected, their historical position, intercourse with other nations, religion, arts, and manners.

The perusal of these volumes cannot fail to interest every intelligent mind, as recording the progress of those important labours, from which we may hope "to fill up a part of a great blank in the history of the world;" as well as by the instruction and entertainment afforded in the observations and anecdotes, most agreeably told, in a lucid and attractive style.

Such recommendations, in addition to the importance of the subject, cannot fail to establish Mr. Layard's volumes as one of the standard works of literature, and bespeak for them an enduring popularity.

Poems. By William Cullen Bryant.*

Ours is an age of rivalry, or rather of mutual co-operation, where the people of every country and clime are eager to show who amongst them will do most for the common good. Free trade has published to the world the sublime mission of nations and individuals, to labour not for themselves alone, but for all to whom a common Father has given a common origin and aim.

* London: Kent and Richards, Paternoster Row.

Already there is a change come over the spirit of the world's dream ; Peace, and her attendant companions—the soft humanities of life—the arts that humanize and bless mankind are engaging the attention and are sharing the honours that were at one time exclusively paid to war. Labour, with her million arms, has come forth to show the world what peaceful industry can do. And the world looks and admires, and loves ; and even the poorest workman standing at the loom, or toiling in the mine every day, has higher views of the dignity and blessedness of work, and the purposes that work may serve.

Thus much true in commercial affairs, is yet truer when applied to the poet who sings, or the philosopher who discovers, those spiritual truths which are essential to the world's improvement and the world's life. Here especially it is true that we are members one of another—that men are fellow-workers for one common good ; that to confine what of light we have ; that to encourage selfish views ; that to fan the flame of mutual jealousy and hate, is forbidden by the common origin we all admit, and the common destiny we all obey. Thought is free ; it comes to all as the breath of heaven, as the light of day. It overleaps mountain barriers ; it penetrates deserts ; it divides seas ; it lives as well on the eternal snows as beneath the burning sun of the East ; nor can it live without utterance. It must find a voice wherever it may be, and that will be one such as the world will hear.

Thus is it, thoughts of power and poems of rare truth and beauty from the far West mingle with our own, and thus help to form the creed and fashion of the age in which we live. Not long since we noticed in our pages the *Evangeline* of Longfellow as a masterpiece of art. In William Cullen Bryant we see what appears to deserve similar treatment of us ; but first let us give a few particulars as to the man. Like that of most poets, of most men of thought rather than deeds, his life is a tale soon told.

He was born in Massachusetts, in 1794. His father was a physician there, who saw early indications of his child's genius, and watched over it with wisdom and care. Like Cowley, like Pope, like Scott, indeed like almost all the poets, with the exception of old Hobbes of Malmesbury, Bryant began his poetical career young. At the age of ten he wrote several translations from the Latin poets, which were printed in a newspaper at Northampton. At this age also he wrote a satire, which was eagerly read and approved. In his sixteenth year he became a student at William's college, where he speedily distinguished himself. In 1815 he married, and commenced practice in the profession of the law. The next year he published

in the *North American Review*, his noble poem of *Thanatopsis*. In 1825 he retired from his profession, and devoted himself to literature. In 1826 he assumed the direction of the *Evening Post*, of New York, with which he has ever since been connected. "Mr. Bryant," says an American critic, "is a translator to the world of the silent language of the universe. In the meditation of nature he has learned high lessons of philosophy and religion. In his descriptions of nature there is remarkable fidelity. They convey in an extraordinary degree the actual impression of what is grand and beautiful, and peculiar in American scenery; the old and shadowy forests stand as they grew up from the seeds just planted; the sea, like prairies, stretching in airy undulations beyond the eye's extremest vision. The lakes, and mountains, and rivers, he brings before us in pictures warmly coloured with the hues of the imagination, and as truthful as those which the artist depicts on the canvass." This is high praise, but it is deserved. Bryant has been amongst the mountains and plains, and far-stretching prairies, and gigantic rivers of his own fatherland, and has caught something of their inspiration and fire. Our first specimen is one, however, that will not particularly illustrate this remark. It is a fine echo of what Nature proclaims in the contemplation of decay and death. It is as follows:—

THANATOPSIS.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
 Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
 A various language; for his gayer hours
 She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
 And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
 Into his darker musings, with a mild
 And healing sympathy, that steals away
 Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
 Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
 Over thy spirit, and sad images
 Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
 And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
 Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
 Go forth, under the open sky, and list
 To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
 Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
 Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
 The all-beholding sun shall see no more
 In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
 Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears, ..

Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone—nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre.—The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between ;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green ; and poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning—and the Barcan desert pierce,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are there :
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest—and what if thou withdraw
Unheeded by the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favourite phantom ; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come,
And make their bed with thee. As the long train

Of ages glides away, the sons of men,
 The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
 In the full strength of years, matron, and maid,
 And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man,—
 Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
 By those who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
 The innumerable caravan, that moves
 To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
 His chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
 Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
 By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
 About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Simple, but equally beautiful, is the poem headed *To a Water Fowl*. It shows the same power of listening to what Nature sings, and reaching it in melodious voice. We believe it has long been familiar with the British public, but we shall be forgiven, we trust, for quoting it again.

TO A WATER FOWL.

WHITHER, 'midst falling dew,
 While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
 Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
 Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
 Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
 As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
 Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
 Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
 Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
 On the chafed ocean side?

There is a power whose care
 Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
 The desert and illimitable air,—
 Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fann'd
 At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere,
 Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
 Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end ;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy shelter'd nest.

Thou'rt gone ; the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form ; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

But not only is Mr. Bryant the poet of nature, but of humanity also. He can discern the beautiful and sublime as well in the crowded street, and amidst the busy cares of life, as in the vast solitudes of his own great land, as yet almost untrodden by the foot of man. He has no morbid aversion to his fellows as they toil, and live, and die. He does not scorn, with Byron, our aristocratic poet of cant, the abodes of active life, and the hum of human cities. Amidst these everlasting wars he can discern and utter the majesty and religion they conceal. This is shown in the following rhymes of the city.

HYMN OF THE CITY.

Not in the solitude
Alone may man commune with Heaven, or see
Only in savage wood
And sunny vale, the present Deity ;
Or only hear his voice
Where the winds whisper and the waves rejoice.

Even here do I behold
Thy steps, Almighty !—here, amidst the crowd,
Through the great city roll'd,
With everlasting murmur, deep and loud—
Choking the ways that wind
'Mongst the proud piles, the work of human kind.

Thy golden sunshine comes
From the round heaven, and on their dwellings lies,
And lights their inner homes ;
For them thou fill'st with air the unbounded skies,
And givest them the stores
Of ocean, and the harvests of its shores.

Thy Spirit is around,
 Quickening the restless mass that sweeps along ;
 And this eternal sound—
 Voices and footfalls of the numberless throng—
 Like the resounding sea,
 Or like the rainy tempest, speaks of thee.

And when the hours of rest
 Come, like a calm upon the mid-sea brine,
 Hushing its billowy breast—
 The quiet of that moment too is thine ;
 It breathes of him who keeps
 The vast and helpless city while it sleeps.

Such are a few flowers we have gathered from this volume, which is worthy of a place in every library, and which we cordially commend. Thus is the new world repaying the old. Thus is America aiding in the civilization and progress of the human race. Bryant is one of its first and softest poets, and he is worthy of a cordial welcome in every British home.

The Wrongs of Poland. A Poem in three cantos, comprising the siege of Vienna, with historical notes. By the author of "Parental Wisdom." London: Saunders and Otley. 1849.

THE lapse of years cannot obliterate the unredressed wrongs of Poland, nor diminish her claims for justice. Universal is the indignation felt at the cruel policy of the tyrants who have crushed her. For what does not Europe owe to the heroes of Poland, who in the hour of extreme peril became the shield and bulwark of Christendom, repelling the tide of Turkish invasion, and driving back with signal defeat the discomfited hosts of the Crescent? Ingratitude, alas, is all that Poland has reaped for her good service. Basely betrayed by those she served, her cup of misery and degradation has been mingled to overflowing by a cruel despotism, and she has drained it to the dregs.

We strongly recommend to our readers a careful perusal of the handsome little volume, the title of which is prefixed to this notice. Much information, conveyed in a pleasing style, will be found in its pages. The notes are excellent, abounding with historical intelligence and romantic incident. We quote the author's sketch of Kosciusko, and the note upon it:—

" In Kosciusko's noble breast, how pure,
 How bright, the patriotic flame burnt on,
 'Midst toils and sufferings, e'en till quenched in death !
 For Poland's weal he bravely lived and died ;
 For her his heart and pulse beat ever true :
 And when her independence was at stake,
 A diadem and proffered wealth he scorned.
 How swelled his manly breast with manly pride,
 When his broad camp was pitched on Vola's plain,
 Where soon 'gainst odds threefold he won the day !
 His generous spirit brooked no foreign rule ;
 For freemen's rights, 'neath freedom's flag he fought.
 Unchanged the hero in each dire reverse,
 Though doomed his country's ruin to survive,
 And waste his weary days in captive gloom.

" After many conflicts, and repeated victories over superior forces, Kosciusko and his little band were overpowered by numbers. The 10th of October, 1794, was fatal to the patriots. The Russians, who had been joined by 40,000 Prussians, unknown to Kosciusko, were prevailing ; and Poninski, who was expected every minute with reinforcements, not arriving, Kosciusko, at the head of his principal officers, made a grand charge into the midst of the enemy ; he fell, covered with wounds, and all his companions were killed or taken prisoners. His inseparable friend, the amiable poet Niemcewicz, was among the latter number. He lay senseless among the dead, but notwithstanding the plainness of his attire, was at length recognized, and found still breathing. His name, even now, commanded respect from the Cossacks, who had been going to plunder him. They immediately formed a litter with their lances, to carry him to their general, who ordered his wounds to be dressed, and treated him with the respect he merited. As soon as he was able to travel, he was conveyed to Petersburg, where Catherine condemned him to perpetual imprisonment.

" The death of Catherine, in 1796, delivered the Poles from one of their most detestable tyrants. Paul, who, though ferocious and tyrannical in his latter years, appears in the early part of his reign to have been animated with generous sentiments, set Kosciusko at liberty, offered him a high military post, and gave him 1,500 serfs, and 12,000 roubles, as a testimony of his regard. But he declined the offer, and returned the presents, intending to go to America. All the Poles whom Catherine had imprisoned were liberated, and 12,000, who had been sent to Siberia, were allowed to return to their homes. This

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beneficence was more fatal to Polish independence than scores of Praga butcheries, as gratitude would keep the liberated Poles on an honourable parole. Kosciusko never drew his sword again."

It was in 1798 that he touched at England, on his passage to America. He staid some time at Bristol, in the house of M. Vanderhort, the foreign consul, where Dr. Warner had an interview with him, which he describes in his "Literary Recollections," and gives the following pleasing picture of the great man:—

"I never contemplated a more interesting human figure than Kosciusko stretched upon his couch. His wounds were still unhealed, and he was unable to sit upright. He appeared to be a small man, spare and delicate; a black silk bandage crossed his fair and high, but somewhat wrinkled forehead; beneath it, his dark, eagle eye sent forth a stream of light, that indicated the steady flame of patriotism which still burned within his soul, unquenched by disaster and wounds, weakness, poverty and exile. Contrasted with its brightness was the paleness of his countenance, and the wan cast of every feature. He spoke very tolerable English, though in a low and feeble tone; but his conversation, replete with fine sense, lively remark, and sagacious answer, evinced a noble understanding and a cultivated mind. On rising to depart, I offered him my hand. He took it; my eyes filled with tears; he gave it a warm grasp. He muttered something about 'brighter prospects and happier days.' He faintly smiled, and said, 'Ah, sir, he who devotes himself for his country must not look for his reward on this side the grave.'"

The Days when we had Tails on us. London: Newman and Co.

THIS is an amusing little *brochure*, written by a gentleman who has frequently enriched our pages with contributions full of wit and worth. The introduction into the army of the shell jacket is still fresh in our readers' minds. Against this innovation one unanimous cry has been raised. Our author adopts the line of argument commonly called *reductio ad absurdum*, and shows, by help of most spirited coloured plates, and corresponding letter-press, that the change effected has been neither useful nor ornamental. In this he has succeeded admirably. We commend his production to all who feel and deplore the grievance here held up to public laughter. Our notice of it is somewhat late, but our copy was unfortunately mislaid.

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